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A Comprehensive Commentary of the First Book of Nephi

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A Comprehensive Commentary
of the
First Book of Nephi

*together with references for further study
from the General Conferences of
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
the Encyclopedia of Mormonism
and other doctrinal texts by General Authorities of the Church*

Written and compiled by
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Parrish Press
Orem, Utah

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Preface

This project began as an attempt to provide my children and grandchildren something of their ancestor's love and understanding of the scriptures. I began producing volumes many years ago which I was pleased to call Paraphrastic studies. I wrote one of these studies for each of the four Gospels and the letters of Paul. Eventually, however, I began to sense that there was much that I knew about the New Testament that my "translations" could not communicate. I therefore thought to write a comprehensive commentary on the entire New Testament, beginning with Matthew and concluding with the book of Revelation. As I published each of the nine volumes, I included the paraphrastic studies, where I had them, in conjunction with the commentary for each book in the New Testament. I began this project in 2005 and completed the final volume in 2010. The whole effort was a delight to my soul.

A year before I retired from the Church Educational System, in 2003, I thought to produce an 1830 formatting of the Book of Mormon using the present text of the 1981 edition. This was a relatively easy task, given the technology available to me. I distributed these to my colleagues at the Orem Institute of Religion, members of my family, and a few other interested parties for the cost of printing and binding them. Sometime in the early spring of 2007, I was impressed to begin a verse by verse commentary on the Book of Mormon, a task that I had not presumed to attempt, inasmuch as there are no translation difficulties that abound in the Old and New Testaments. Yet, there were instances of nineteenth-century word usage and syntactic issues that I thought a commentary might help to clarify. As I began, however, I discovered that there was much more that I could communicate to my children of my understanding of the ancient record of the Nephites, material that I had gleaned as I taught the scriptures during my thirty-five year career with CES. This labor eventually produced five volumes of moderate size. As I published each segment of the commentary, I enclosed the 1830 formatting of each book in the Book of Mormon that I had devise several years before. The last volume also appeared in late 2010.

By the time that I was fully engaged with writing commentaries on both the New Testament and the Book of Mormon, I had become infatuated with the idea that I might be able to expand the commentaries to include the other volumes of scripture as well. Thus, in the winter of 2010 I began writing commentaries on the Pearl of Great Price, and the Doctrine and Covenants. Once I finished with the Pearl of Great Price, I began to move ahead with the book of Genesis and the rest of the Old Testament. In the late fall of 2014 I finished the last of the commentaries on the Old Testament, for a total of thirty-three printed and bound volumes. With these volumes and the others produced over the past ten years, I have completed commentary on every verse of the Standard Works of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

My procedure for writing the Commentary was similar to that used in creating the original paraphrastic studies. The same reference texts were employed. For difficult words in Greek, Hebrew,

and English I resorted to the works of James Strong and other lexicographers for linguistic insight. I consider the contributions made by conservative Protestant scholarship (as recorded in the *New International Version*) and conservative Catholic scholarship (as related in the *New Jerusalem Bible*). I resorted to the considered thought of Adam Clarke, one of the most prominent and prolific commentators on the sacred manuscripts available at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and who, I believe, was a man of great faith. I consulted with the *Joseph Smith Translation* at appropriate times (including in another column an indication that a JST change had been made for any given verse), and frequently to the writings of the General Authorities of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as I contemplated the possible meanings of each word and phrase. From time to time I resorted to *Smith's Bible Dictionary* and *Discovering the World of the Bible* by LaMar Berrett for some of the more arcane information that I thought would illuminate the text.

I have attempted to maintain a steady course throughout my commentaries, treating each verse as unique, and where appropriate, duplicate notes and the text rather than use cross-references within the volume. Some may find this a waste of paper and ink, but I frankly dislike having to rifle through pages or volumes trying to find the first instance of the note or commentary. The duplications are easily ignored; fumbling through pages cannot be. It is in the best interests of the reader, however, to contemplate the reasons why such duplications exist in the biblical text in the first place. They are purposeful and I have attempted to point out their purpose as I have progressed through each volume.

My numbering system for the notes used in the body of the commentary was adapted from historical linguistic texts with which I am familiar and which I had found quite useful. The pattern used is *chapter.verse.word*; thus note “3.4.5” would contain material referring to the fifth word in the book of Hosea 3:4, for example. I make no comprehensive promises regarding the preciseness of my word count in any particular verse, but it will be close enough to eliminate any distressing confusion. Inasmuch as I began this series with the Gospel of Matthew, there will be times when I will make reference to my own work in that first volume. Sometimes there will be no more than a reference, “*MT-C 23.4.5*”; other times I may quote directly from the original text. In either case my sole motivation will be to facilitate the flow of ideas rather than to multiply words. There are enough words already. References to the Commentaries on other books of the New Testament are abbreviated as follows:

Matthew—*MT-C*
 Mark—*MK-C*
 Luke—*LK-C*
 John—*JN-C*
 Acts—*AC-C*
 Romans—*RM-C*
 1 Corinthians—*1 CO-C*
 2 Corinthians—*2 CO-C*
 Galatians—*GA-C*

Ephesians—*EP-C*
 Philippians—*PP-C*
 Colossians—*CL-C*
 1 Thessalonians—*1 TH-C*
 2 Thessalonians—*2 TH-C*
 1 Timothy—*1 TM-C*
 2 Timothy—*2 TM-C*
 Titus—*TT-C*
 Philemon—*PL-C*

Hebrews—*HB-C*
 1 Peter—*1 PE-C*
 2 Peter—*2 PE-C*
 1 John—*1 JN-C*
 2 John—*2 JN-C*
 3 John—*3 JN-C*
 Revelation—*RV-C*

References to the Commentaries in the books of the Old Testament are as follows:

Genesis— <i>GE-C</i>	2 Chronicles— <i>2 CR-C</i>	Daniel— <i>DA-C</i>
Exodus— <i>EX-C</i>	Ezra— <i>ER-C</i>	Hosiah— <i>HS-C</i>
Leviticus— <i>LV-C</i>	Nehemiah— <i>NE-C</i>	Joel— <i>JL-C</i>
Numbers— <i>NM-C</i>	Esther— <i>ES-C</i>	Amos— <i>AM-C</i>
Deuteronomy— <i>DT-C</i>	Job— <i>JB-C</i>	Obadiah— <i>OB-C</i>
Joshua— <i>JO-C</i>	Psalms— <i>PS-C</i>	Jonah— <i>JH-C</i>
Judges— <i>JD-C</i>	Proverbs— <i>PV-C</i>	Micah— <i>MH-C</i>
Ruth— <i>RU-C</i>	Ecclesiastes— <i>ES-C</i>	Nahum— <i>NA-C</i>
1 Samuel— <i>1 SM-C</i>	Song of Solomon— <i>SS-C</i>	Habakkuk— <i>HB-C</i>
2 Samuel— <i>2 SM-C</i>	Isaiah— <i>IS-C</i>	Zephaniah— <i>ZP-C</i>
1 Kings— <i>1 KG-C</i>	Jeremiah— <i>JR-C</i>	Haggai— <i>HG-C</i>
2 Kings— <i>2 KG-C</i>	Lamentations— <i>LM-C</i>	Zechariah— <i>ZE-C</i>
1 Chronicles— <i>1 CR-C</i>	Ezekiel— <i>EZ-C</i>	Malachi— <i>ML-C</i>

I have also made reference to the other standard works of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The references to the Book of Mormon are articulated in bold and italics lettering using the following abbreviations:

1 Nephi— <i>1 NE-C</i>	Omni— <i>OM-C</i>	3 Nephi— <i>3 NE-C</i>
2 Nephi— <i>2 NE-C</i>	Words of Mormon— <i>WM-C</i>	4 Nephi— <i>4 NE-C</i>
Jacob— <i>JA-C</i>	Mosiah— <i>MS-C</i>	Mormon— <i>MM-C</i>
Enos— <i>EN-C</i>	Alma— <i>AL-C</i>	Ether— <i>ET-C</i>
Jarom— <i>JM-C</i>	Helaman— <i>HE-C</i>	Moroni— <i>MR-C</i>

The abbreviation *TPW-C* refers to the material found on the Title Page of the Book of Mormon and in the Testimonies of the Three and Eight Witnesses. The references to Sections that are in the Doctrine and Covenants are indicated as *DC-C* followed by the section number and verse (*OD1-C* and *OD2-C* are self-explanatory); The Pearl of Great Price references contained herein use the following abbreviations: *MO-C*, *AB-C*, *SM-C*, *SH-C*, and *AF-C*.

In some cases I have taken on what some would consider controversial material. I make no apologies for so doing. I have found that my children are best served when an issue is approached head on, the differing points of view presented, and the rationale given as to why one school of thought ought to be preferred over another. Sometimes the decisions are logically founded; others the result of doctrinal points that are unique to theology of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In most cases I have not argued authorities, even though I could have inserted multiple references to the writings of scholars with whom I am familiar. I have chosen to have my sources on any particular issue to remain anonymous in the text of the commentary for several reasons. First and foremost, this work is my commentary, what I believe and hold to be true. In the end, that is what my children wish to know. Secondly, I did not wish to have my children accept or dismiss a particular view merely because of who had been the author of it. Many wonderful insights have been made by scholars both inside and outside of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Wherein I have found one view to be preferable over another has not been a partisan matter, but rather a matter of the mind, heart, and spirit cooperating together in an attempt to understand what must be the truth. Thirdly, I have been quite clear who my “authorities” have been. It is my fondest

desire that my children would become as familiar with their writings as I have. Were I to cite all of my sources with extensive quotes from each, there would be no need for them to open any of the books that I have come to love. That, in part, is why I included the third column containing cross-references to the various doctrinal works in the Commentaries. Exceptions to this practice should be noted as being of extreme importance.

In addition to the text of the Standard Works, together with my own commentary, I inserted a column of references for further study. The citations are taken from three major sources: the *Conference Reports* of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints from April 1980 to November 2002 (abbreviated as **CR** followed by the year, month and page number); the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (four volumes, abbreviated **EM** followed by the volume and page number); and *A Scripture Index* (a compilation of scripture references cited in various texts published by General Authorities of the Church). For those not familiar with the abbreviations used in *A Scripture Index*, I include them below:

TPJS—*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*
GD—*Gospel Doctrine*
MA—*Mediation and Atonement*
FWR—*Far West Record*
DHC—*History of the Church* (7 vols.)
TSWK—*Teaching of Spencer W. Kimball*
MF—*Miracle of Forgiveness*
FPM—*Faith Precedes the Miracle*
MD—*Mormon Doctrine*

PM—*Promised Messiah*
MM—*Mortal Messiah* (4 vols.)
MLM—*Millennial Messiah*
DNTC—*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary* (3 vols.)
JC—*Jesus the Christ*
AF—*Articles of Faith*
DS—*Doctrines of Salvation* (3 vols.)
AGQ—*Answers to Gospel Questions* (5 vols.)

As with each of the volumes previously published, I include two lists. The first, bound in front of the Commentary, is a listing of all of the words and phrases upon which I have made extensive remarks, a kind of sequential table of contents. I have also arranged this list alphabetically and have placed it at the end of the Commentary as a kind of index. A comprehensive alphabetical index for the entire volume appears as the last section of this book.

Needless to say that all of the errors in the material submitted herein to the reader are the product of my own limitations as a scholar; all of the brilliance which may appear here is the product of minds and hearts filled with the fire of the Spirit of God, from whom all truth and beauty ultimately derive.

A Note on the Electronic Edition

Not only did my children and other family members receive bound copies of commentaries, but there were a number of friends and neighbors who had expressed an interest in them. There were requests from others who desired copies of what I had done, but I was not in a position to provide them with hard copies. Inasmuch as I had all of the volumes in computer files, I thought to compile each of the commentaries in some format that could be read on a smart device. I opted to use the Adobe Acrobat, turning all of the work into PDF files. I have used these on my tablet for many years and have found them useful and far easier to cart about with me. In the early spring of 2015, my neighbor David Dollahite arranged for a meeting with Jack Welch and Marny Parkin regarding the possibility of BYU providing a dedicated web site so that there would be greater public access to my

work. Thus began the present enterprise of editing and standardizing all that had done during the last ten years. My commentary on the Gospel of Mark is the second of these electronic volumes. Within a year or so I hope to have all of the books available in the same format.

PNH
Orem, Utah
July 2015

Sequence of Specifically Noted Words and Phrases in the 1 Nephi Commentary

1.0.4— <i>Lehi</i>	2.4.44— <i>provisions</i>	3.12.5— <i>Laban</i>
1.0.8— <i>Sariah</i>	2.5.13–14— <i>Red Sea</i>	3.13.8— <i>Laban</i>
1.0.19— <i>Laman</i>	2.5.44— <i>Sariah</i>	3.13.37— <i>robber</i>
1.0.20— <i>Lemuel</i>	2.5.51— <i>Laman</i>	3.14.2— <i>Laman</i>
1.0.21— <i>Sam</i>	2.5.52— <i>Lemuel</i>	3.14.13— <i>Laban</i>
1.0.23— <i>Nephi</i>	2.5.54— <i>Sam</i>	3.15.8–11— <i>As the Lord liveth</i>
1.0.35— <i>Jerusalem</i>	2.7.10–12— <i>altar of stones</i>	3.15.13–15— <i>as we live</i>
1.0.79— <i>Jews</i>	2.8.14— <i>Laman</i>	3.16.46— <i>commandments</i>
1.0.90— <i>Ishmael</i>	2.8.20–21— <i>Red Sea</i>	3.17.5— <i>Jerusalem</i>
1.0.139— <i>Bountiful</i>	2.9.18–19— <i>Red Sea</i>	3.20.22— <i>prophets</i>
1.0.164–165— <i>I, Nephi</i>	2.9.23— <i>Laman</i>	3.23.17— <i>Laban</i>
1.1.2— <i>Nephi</i>	2.10.6— <i>Lemuel</i>	3.24.11— <i>Laban</i>
1.1.7— <i>goodly</i>	2.11.8— <i>stiffneckedness</i>	3.25.8— <i>Laban</i>
1.1.9— <i>therefore</i>	2.11.10— <i>Laman</i>	3.26.14— <i>Laban</i>
1.1.17— <i>learning</i>	2.11.12— <i>Lemuel</i>	3.27.16— <i>Laban</i>
1.1.54–56— <i>mysteries of God</i>	2.11.39— <i>Jerusalem</i>	3.27.27— <i>cavity</i>
1.1.57— <i>therefore</i>	2.12.3— <i>Laman</i>	3.28.7— <i>Laman</i>
1.2.8— <i>language</i>	2.12.5— <i>Lemuel</i>	3.28.20— <i>Lemuel</i>
1.2.19— <i>Jews</i>	2.13.6— <i>Jerusalem</i>	3.29.40–42— <i>Know you not</i>
1.2.22— <i>Egyptians</i>	2.13.19— <i>prophets</i>	3.29.67— <i>Jerusalem</i>
1.4.11–12— <i>first year</i>	2.13.23— <i>Jews</i>	3.29.74— <i>Laban</i>
1.4.17— <i>Zedekiah</i>	2.14.17— <i>Lemuel</i>	3.31.7— <i>Laman</i>
1.4.20— <i>Judah</i>	2.16.8— <i>Nephi</i>	3.31.9— <i>Lemuel</i>
1.4.23— <i>Lehi</i>	2.16.29— <i>wherefore</i>	3.31.24— <i>Laban</i>
1.4.27— <i>Jerusalem</i>	2.17.5— <i>Sam</i>	3.31.38— <i>fifty</i>
1.4.39–40— <i>many prophets</i>	2.17.22— <i>Spirit</i>	4.1.19— <i>Jerusalem</i>
1.5.1— <i>Wherefore</i>	2.18.3— <i>Laman</i>	4.1.46— <i>Laban</i>
1.5.9— <i>Lehi</i>	2.18.5— <i>Lemuel</i>	4.1.55–57— <i>tens of thousands</i>
1.6.45— <i>tremble</i>	2.18.18— <i>hardness</i>	4.2.12— <i>Moses</i>
1.7.14— <i>Jerusalem</i>	2.19.16— <i>Nephi</i>	4.2.22–23— <i>Red Sea</i>
1.9.9— <i>One</i>	2.23.13— <i>curse</i>	4.2.27–29— <i>hither and thither</i>
1.10.5–6— <i>twelve others</i>	3.1.8— <i>Nephi</i>	4.2.45— <i>Pharaoh</i>
1.11.28— <i>book</i>	3.2.32— <i>return</i>	4.3.42— <i>Laban</i>
1.13.8— <i>Jerusalem</i>	3.2.34— <i>Jerusalem</i>	4.3.46— <i>Egyptians</i>
1.13.48— <i>Babylon</i>	3.3.3— <i>Laban</i>	4.4.31— <i>Jerusalem</i>
1.16.4— <i>Nephi</i>	3.3.6–9— <i>record of the Jews</i>	4.5.24— <i>Nephi</i>
1.18.21— <i>Lehi</i>	3.3.13— <i>genealogy</i>	4.5.36— <i>Laban</i>
1.18.27— <i>Jerusalem</i>	3.3.24— <i>brass</i>	4.7.14— <i>Laban</i>
1.19.8— <i>Jews</i>	3.4.18— <i>Laban</i>	4.8.12— <i>Laban</i>
1.19.57— <i>Messiah</i>	3.7.8— <i>Nephi</i>	4.9.42— <i>steel</i>
1.20.4— <i>Jews</i>	3.9.3— <i>Nephi</i>	4.10.17— <i>Laban</i>
1.20.18— <i>prophets</i>	3.9.15— <i>tents</i>	4.15.21— <i>Moses</i>
1.20.45— <i>Nephi</i>	3.9.23— <i>Jerusalem</i>	4.16.7— <i>law</i>
1.20.52–53— <i>tender mercies</i>	3.10.16— <i>Jerusalem</i>	4.17.10— <i>Laban</i>
2.1.23— <i>Blessed</i>	3.11.3–4— <i>cast lots</i>	4.18.12— <i>Laban</i>
2.1.26— <i>Lehi</i>	3.11.15— <i>Laban</i>	4.19.18— <i>Laban</i>
2.2.26— <i>wilderness</i>	3.11.26— <i>Laman</i>	4.19.29— <i>whit</i>

4.20.14—*Laban*
 4.21.9—*Laban*
 4.22.11—*Jews*
 4.22.17—*Laban*
 4.23.11—*Laban*
 4.26.19—*Laban*
 4.27.13—*Jews*
 4.28.8—*Laman*
 4.28.17—*Lemuel*
 4.28.19—*Sam*
 4.30.11—*Laban*
 4.30.33—*Jerusalem*
 4.31.4—*Nephi*
 4.31.10—*stature*
 4.31.16—*strength*
 4.31.28—*Laban*
 4.32.21–22—*Lord liveth*
 4.32.25–26—*I live*
 4.35.7—*Zoram*
 4.37.8—*Zoram*
 4.38.17—*Laban*
 5.1.28—*Sariah*
 5.4.48—*Jerusalem*
 5.5.33—*Laban*
 5.6.10—*Lehi*
 5.6.14—*Sariah*
 5.6.28—*Jerusalem*
 5.6.35—*Jews*
 5.8.46—*Laban*
 5.9.14—*sacrifice*
 5.9.16–17—*burnt offerings*
 5.9.29—*Israel*
 5.10.11—*Israel*
 5.10.14—*Lehi*
 5.11.12—*Moses*
 5.11.19—*creation*
 5.11.26—*Adam*
 5.11.28—*Eve*
 5.12.7—*Jews*
 5.12.15—*commencement*
 5.12.20—*Zedekiah*
 5.12.23—*Judah*
 5.13.8—*prophets*
 5.13.21—*Zedekiah*
 5.13.34—*Jeremiah*
 5.14.9—*Lehi*
 5.14.18—*genealogy*
 5.14.31—*Joseph*
 5.14.41—*Jacob*
 5.14.46—*Egypt*
 5.15.15—*Egypt*
 5.16.5—*Lehi*
 5.16.14—*Laban*
 5.16.20—*Joseph*
 5.19.16—*dimmed*
 5.19.23—*prophesied*
 6.1.4—*Nephi*
 6.1.17–18—*my record*
 6.1.29–30—*these plates*
 6.1.41—*record*
 6.2.12—*Joseph*
 6.4.19—*Abraham*
 6.4.25—*Isaac*
 6.4.30—*Jacob*
 7.1.13—*Lehi*
 7.1.19—*prophesying*
 7.2.13—*Nephi*
 7.2.24—*Jerusalem*
 7.2.28—*Ishmael*
 7.3.8—*Nephi*
 7.3.23—*Jerusalem*
 7.4.14—*Ishmael*
 7.5.10—*soften*
 7.5.14—*Ishmael*
 7.6.14—*Laman*
 7.6.16—*Lemuel*
 7.6.23—*Ishmael*
 7.6.33—*rebel*
 7.6.40—*Nephi*
 6.6.42—*Sam*
 7.6.54—*daughters*
 7.7.19—*Jerusalem*
 7.8.4—*Nephi*
 7.8.22—*Laman*
 7.8.24—*Lemuel*
 7.11.27—*Laban*
 7.13.40—*Jerusalem*
 7.14.11—*strive*
 7.14.20—*prophets*
 7.14.22—*Jeremiah*
 7.14.38—*father*
 7.15.13—*Jerusalem*
 7.16.9—*Nephi*
 7.19.22–25—*one of the daughters*
 7.19.27—*Ishmael*
 7.22.28—*Ishmael*
 7.22.51—*sacrifice*
 7.22.53–54—*burnt offerings*
 8.2.24—*dream*
 8.2.33—*vision*
 8.3.21—*Nephi*
 8.3.25—*Sam*
 8.4.3—*Laman*
 8.4.5—*Lemuel*
 8.4.13—*methought*
 8.4.23—*wilderness*
 8.5.17–18—*white robe*
 8.8.34–35—*tender mercies*
 8.10.10—*tree*
 8.10.12—*fruit*
 8.10.18—*happy*
 8.11.24—*sweet*
 8.14.29—*Sariah*
 8.14.31—*Sam*
 8.14.33—*Nephi*
 8.17.11—*Laman*
 8.17.13—*Lemuel*
 8.20.6—*strait*
 8.21.5—*concourses*
 8.21.12–13—*pressing forward*
 8.28.25–26—*forbidden paths*
 8.29.4—*Nephi*
 8.32.25–26—*strange roads*
 8.33.11–12—*strange building*
 8.35.2—*Laman*
 8.35.4—*Lemuel*
 9.1.23—*Lemuel*
 9.1.36–37—*these plates*
 9.2.3—*as*
 9.2.21–22—*full account*
 9.2.32—*Nephi*
 9.6.42—*Amen*
 10.1.4—*Nephi*
 10.1.11–12—*these plates*
 10.1.18—*reign*
 10.1.20—*ministry*
 10.2.35—*Jews*
 10.3.6—*destroyed*
 10.3.11—*Jerusalem*
 10.3.19—*Babylon*
 10.3.24–25—*due time*
 10.4.13—*Jerusalem*
 10.4.15—*prophet*
 10.4.24—*Jews*
 10.4.27—*Messiah*
 10.4.33—*Savior*
 10.5.7—*prophets*
 10.5.19—*Messiah*
 10.5.27—*Redeemer*
 10.6.7—*lost*
 10.6.11—*fallen*
 10.6.20—*rely*
 10.6.23—*Redeemer*
 10.7.7—*prophet*
 10.7.13—*Messiah*
 10.8.12—*Prepare*
 10.8.20—*make*
 10.8.26—*standeth*
 10.8.35—*he*
 10.8.40—*whose*
 10.9.9—*Bethabara*
 10.9.10–11—*beyond Jordan*

10.9.27—*Messiah*
 10.10.7—*Messiah*
 10.10.21–23—*Lamb of God*
 10.11.20—*gospel*
 10.11.27—*Jews*
 10.11.44—*Messiah*
 10.11.71—*Gentiles*
 10.12.9—*Gentiles*
 10.12.16—*Israel*
 10.14.6—*Israel*
 10.14.21—*Gentiles*
 10.14.28—*Gospel*
 10.14.55—*Messiah*
 10.16.23—*Lemuel*
 10.17.8—*Nephi*
 10.17.58—*Messiah*
 11.1.35—*pondering*
 11.1.45—*Spirit*
 11.1.54—*mountain*
 11.6.16—*Hosanna*
 11.6.40—*Nephi*
 11.7.12—*sign*
 11.8.12—*Look!*
 11.8.35—*beauty*
 11.8.47—*whiteness*
 11.12.11—*Look!*
 11.13.15—*Jerusalem*
 11.13.26—*Nazareth*
 11.13.36—*virgin*
 11.13.41–43—*fair and white*
 11.14.14—*angel*
 11.14.26—*Nephi*
 11.15.7—*virgin*
 11.16.9—*condescension*
 11.18.8—*virgin*
 11.18.25—*flesh*
 11.19.11–12—*carried away*
 11.20.7—*virgin*
 11.21.9–11—*Lamb of God*
 11.24.12—*Look!*
 11.25.28–31—*fountain of living waters*
 11.27.7—*Redeemer*
 11.27.22—*prophet*
 11.27.32–34—*Lamb of God*
 11.30.14—*Look!*
 11.31.8—*Look!*
 11.31.16–18—*Lamb of God*
 11.32.14—*Look!*
 11.32.21–23—*Lamb of God*
 11.33.3—*Nephi*
 11.34.22—*apostles*
 11.35.53—*Israel*
 11.35.62—*apostles*
 11.36.63—*apostles*
 12.1.12—*Look*
 12.1.36—*multitudes*
 12.4.10–12—*mist of darkness*
 12.4.24—*lightnings*
 12.4.28—*thunderings*
 12.4.30—*earthquakes*
 12.4.35–36—*tumultuous noises*
 12.4.47—*rent*
 12.4.51—*mountains*
 12.4.59—*plains*
 12.4.76—*sunk*
 12.4.84—*burned*
 12.4.93—*tumbled*
 12.6.9–11—*Lamb of God*
 12.9.10—*apostles*
 12.9.25—*Israel*
 12.10.26–28—*Lamb of God*
 12.11.7—*Look!*
 12.11.28–30—*Lamb of God*
 12.12.3—*Nephi*
 12.18.12–13—*vain imaginations*
 12.18.44—*Messiah*
 12.18.48–50—*Lamb of God*
 12.23.18—*dark*
 12.23.20—*loathsome*
 12.23.23—*filthy*
 12.23.27—*idleness*
 12.23.32—*abominations*
 13.1.13—*Look!*
 13.3.14—*Gentiles*
 13.4.14—*Gentiles*
 13.4.16—*formation*
 13.4.20—*church*
 13.5.24—*saints*
 13.6.10—*great*
 13.6.12—*abominable*
 13.6.22—*founder*
 13.7.11—*scarlets*
 13.7.13–14—*fine-twined*
 13.7.14—*linen*
 13.7.25—*harlots*
 13.8.19—*scarlets*
 13.8.22–23—*fine-twined*
 13.8.24—*linen*
 13.8.31—*harlots*
 13.9.13—*saints*
 13.10.17—*Gentiles*
 13.12.10—*Gentiles*
 13.12.28–30—*Spirit of God*
 13.13.18—*Gentiles*
 13.14.13—*Gentiles*
 13.15.14—*Gentiles*
 13.16.8—*Nephi*
 13.16.12—*Gentiles*
 13.17.7—*Gentiles*
 13.19.3—*Nephi*
 13.19.7—*Gentiles*
 13.20.8—*Nephi*
 13.23.13—*Jew*
 13.23.16—*Nephi*
 13.23.50—*Israel*
 12.23.62—*prophets*
 12.23.110—*Gentiles*
 13.24.23—*Jew*
 13.24.41—*gospel*
 13.24.49—*apostles*
 13.24.64–66—*Lamb of God*
 13.25.8—*Jews*
 13.25.13—*Gentiles*
 13.26.12—*apostles*
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 13.26.21—*Gentiles*
 13.26.31—*church*
 13.26.48—*gospel*
 13.28.38–41—*Lamb of God*
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 13.30.6—*Gentiles*
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 13.33.13—*Gentiles*
 13.33.24—*Israel*
 13.34.19–21—*Lamb of God*
 13.34.32—*Israel*
 13.34.62—*Gentiles*
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 13.40.62–64—*Lamb of God*
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 14.14.14–16—*Lamb of God*
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 14.23.30—*Jew*
 14.24.7—*apostle*
 14.25.20—*apostle*
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 15.13.22—*Gentiles*
 15.13.49—*Messiah*
 15.14.19—*Israel*
 15.14.50—*gospel*
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 15.20.24—*Israel*
 15.25.3—*Nephi*
 15.28.25—*saints*
 16.1.10—*Nephi*
 16.4.8—*Nephi*
 16.6.22—*Lemuel*
 16.7.8—*Nephi*
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 17.22.37—*Moses*
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 17.23.24—*Israel*
 17.23.36—*Egyptians*
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 17.25.8—*Israel*
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 17.27.6—*Egyptians*
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 19.14.10—*prophet*
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 20.8.35—*womb*
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 21.15.34—*Israel*
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21.18.10— <i>these</i>	22.8.19— <i>Gentiles</i>	22.21.10— <i>prophet</i>
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21.20.23— <i>strait</i>	22.11.26— <i>gospel</i>	22.23.26— <i>power</i>
21.22.15— <i>Gentiles</i>	22.11.35— <i>Israel</i>	22.23.38— <i>popular</i>
21.22.20— <i>standard</i>	22.12.51— <i>Israel</i>	22.23.50— <i>lusts</i>
22.1.10— <i>Nephi</i>	22.14.9–12— <i>O house of Israel</i>	22.23.66— <i>iniquity</i>
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22.3.25— <i>Israel</i>	22.15.5— <i>prophet</i>	22.24.23— <i>Israel</i>
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22.6.9— <i>Gentiles</i>	22.18.44— <i>flesh</i>	22.28.17— <i>Israel</i>
22.6.86— <i>Israel</i>	22.18.60— <i>Israel</i>	22.29.4— <i>Nephi</i>
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22.7.28–29— <i>mighty nation</i>	22.20.19— <i>Moses</i>	22.31.48— <i>Amen</i>
22.7.32— <i>Gentiles</i>	22.20.25— <i>prophet</i>	
22.8.15–16— <i>marvelous work</i>	22.21.4— <i>Nephi</i>	

A Commentary on the Scriptures
by
Paul Nolan Hyde, Ph.D.

The First Book of Nephi

0.0 An analysis of the narrative structure of the Book of Mormon requires a volume of its own. However, from time to time it will prove prudent to note a few of what seem to be the most interesting of the techniques used by the ancient prophets of the Americas and some of the literary traditions that were created in the process. A case in point is the custom of having, at the beginning of most of the books, a headnote which provides a preview of the contents. This practice may have been invented by Nephi, inasmuch as this stylistic mannerism is in his earliest writings we have record of. Or perhaps it was something propounded by Lehi as he began his own record while dwelling in the land of Jerusalem. It is far more likely, however, that both Lehi and Nephi were following a style created long before as demonstrated by the ancients who originated the Brass Plates, the enduring volume of scripture and family history obtained by Nephi from the depository of Laban in Jerusalem. It is certain that the pattern for the metal records produced by the Nephites, known as the Large Plates of Nephi, were no doubt formulated following the example set by that initial record taken with them into the wilderness. The Small Plates of Nephi, the condensed spiritual record produced by Nephi the son of Lehi some twenty years after fabricating the first volume of the Large Plates, were undoubtedly the same dimensions as those which Nephi had first formed from the gold alloy which abounded in the Americas where they first landed. We may assume with some confidence that when the time came for Mormon and Moroni to provide plates upon which they would record the comprehensive history of the Nephite civilization, that they used the same physical format that had served previous chroniclers so well. In conjunction with the writing material used, we should no doubt assume that the styles employed as the histories were being written would have been adopted and adapted from that which had been written before. With regard to the Small Plates of Nephi, both Nephi and Jacob use the book-heading technique in their writings. Enos, Omni, and the Words of Mormon employ none such. Perhaps, Enos and Mormon do not because of the shortness of their writing upon these particular plates. The Book of Omni is comprised of a series of five authors whose individual writings are quite short, and there is no holistic editor as there would have been with the writings of Nephi and Jacob. In the plates produced by Mormon and Moroni, three books do not have headnotes: Mosiah, Mormon, and Moroni. As it turns out, the book of Moroni is more of an afterthought, an appendix produced twenty years after Moroni had completed his father's work. It is a series of vignettes and historical documents rather than a narrative. The book of Mormon was more of a contemporary narrative, rather than a reflective account. No headnote could accurately preview what had not yet been written. In the case of the book of Mosiah, we may clearly assume that the headnote was written by Mormon, but that the text of it was lost with the 116 pages of manuscript that was translated by Joseph Smith, together with the book of Lehi.

1.0.4—*Lehi*—The first prophet of the Lamanites and the Nephites who left the land of Jerusalem about the year 600 BC. Many of his experiences are recorded in the writings of his son, Nephi, engraved upon the Small Plates of Nephi.

1.0.8—*Sariah*—The wife of Lehi and the mother of the family that even-

***THE FIRST BOOK OF NEPHI
HIS REIGN AND MINISTRY**

An account of Lehi and his wife Sariah, and his four sons, being called, (beginning at the eldest) Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and Nephi. The Lord warns Lehi to depart out of the land of Jerusalem, because he prophesieth unto the people concerning their iniquity and they seek to destroy his life. He taketh three days' journey into the wilderness with his family. Nephi taketh his brethren and returneth to the land of Jerusalem after the record of the Jews. The account of their sufferings. They take the daughters of Ishmael to wife. They take their families and depart into the wilderness. Their sufferings and afflictions in the wilderness. The course of their travels. They come to the large waters. Nephi's brethren rebel against him. He confoundeth them, and buildeth a ship. They call the name of the place Bountiful. They cross the large waters into the promised land, and so forth. This is according to the account of Nephi; or in other words, I, Nephi, wrote this record.

* p. 5

1 Ne.
EM 1:145, 188,
196, 198, 199,
212, 213, 350
EM 2: 828, 855
EM 4:1818

tually inherited the land of promise in what is now known as the western hemisphere.

- 1.0.19—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.
- 1.0.20—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites
- 1.0.21—*Sam*—The third son of Lehi and Sariah who tended to follow the direction of his younger brother Nephi. He and his posterity were considered generally to be Nephites.
- 1.0.23—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites
- 1.0.35—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.
- 1.0.79—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.
- 1.0.90—*Ishmael*—A faithful inhabitant of the land of Jerusalem who departed from his inheritance at the word of the prophet Lehi. That Lehi and Ishmael were acquainted prior to the time of his departure seems certain. It would seem somewhat reasonable to assume also, that the sons of Lehi were acquainted with the children of Ishmael, at least casually.
- 1.0.139—*Bountiful*—We do not know precisely where the land of Bountiful was, but it undoubtedly was somewhere on the southeastern coast of Arabia, given the directions supplied by Nephi himself. Many scholars have placed it within the present state of Oman. If conditions today reflect the conditions that existed twenty-six hundred years ago, then the speculation has some merit.
- 1.0.164–165—*I, Nephi*—As conclusive as piece of evidence that might be found in the text that the headnotes were produced by the authors of each book within the Book of Mormon and not composed by the prophet Joseph Smith.

The first edition of the Book of Mormon published in 1830 was formatted differently than the current edition. The major divisions in the text were chapters and paragraphs. It was not until 1876 that the current system of chapters and verses was initiated by Elder Orson Pratt of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles under the direction of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As a result, several of the original chapters were divided into smaller chapters. In this Commentary, the original paragraphs are restored while maintaining the verse numbers as part of the text, and the

original chapters are indicated in bold italic print. The current chapter number is indicated in parentheses. “*Chapter I*” of the first edition was comprised of chapters 1 through 5 of the current edition. The page breaks in the first edition are indicated by asterisks, and the appropriate page number indicated in the right hand-column.

{Chapter I}
(Chapter 1)

{9—1830}

1.1 Nephi’s motivation for committing his life’s story to writing in part revolved around his association with the God of Heaven. In every dispensation God the eternal Father and His Son Jesus Christ have commissioned their servants, the prophets, seers, and revelators, to testify of the principles of salvation in both spoken and written word. Some of these have come down to modern times as the scriptural accounts contained in the Old and New Testaments. These two volumes were compiled from various writings which had been preserved from the original writers. The Book of Mormon was also derived from a vast collection of writings preserved from the days of Nephi until the time that Mormon was commanded by the Lord to synthesize them into the volume which we possess today.

1.1.2—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites

1.1.7—*goodly*—It would seem wise to resort from time to time to those repositories of the English language which would most accurately reflect the usage prevalent at the time the Book of Mormon was translated. For this we will turn primarily to Noah Webster’s *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, first published in 1828. This adjective is defined as “being of a handsome form, beautiful, graceful; pleasant agreeable, desirable”. Nephi thought well of his parents in every way.

1.1.9—*therefore*—A verbal equation sign, meaning “because of this, then the following...” “Wherefore” is another of these equation words and is used frequently as well. In this context Nephi is saying, “I have concluded that my parents were good because they taught me”.

1.1.17—*learning*—No doubt this would have included a comprehensive understanding of the writings of Moses and many of the prophets of ancient Israel. That Nephi had this understanding is frequently iterated in his teachings to his brethren.

1.1.54–56—*mysteries of God*—That is to say, the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

1.1.57—*therefore*—Another equation (see 1.1.9). What precede this marker are the reasons why Nephi determined to make a record of his life.

1.2 When Lehi and his family had first arrived in the land promised to them, Nephi was commanded to take of the abundant metals available to him and make plates upon which he was to record the affairs of his people, including the detailed account previously written by his father. He kept that record for approximately twenty years, calling his writings the Plates of Nephi. At the end of that twenty year period, the Lord commanded Nephi to make another

1 I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents, therefore I was taught somewhat in all the learning of my father; and having seen many afflictions in the course of my days, nevertheless, having been highly favored of the Lord in all my days; yea, having had a great knowledge of the goodness and the mysteries of God, therefore I make a record of my proceedings in my days.

1 Ne. 1
PM 232
CR95-O 110
EM 1:145, 187,
213
EM 2:827, 855
1 Ne. 1:1
EM 1:113
EM 2:977
CR83-A 105
CR85-A 28
CR85-O 47
CR91-O 4, 32
CR92-O 34
CR94-A 47
CR95-O 108
CR96-A 95
CR97-A 43
CR97-O 39
CR99-O 6
CR00-A 102
CR01-A 36
1 Ne. 1:1–2
EM 1:140
1 Ne. 1:1–3
EM 1:178
EM 3:1004
1 Ne. 1:1,3
EM 1:189

2 Yea, I make a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians.

1 Ne. 1:2
AF 291
EM 1:179
EM 2:827

record which would specifically preserve the spiritual history, or the religious life of the family. Nephi was obedient to that commandment and produced the present record, which is usually referred to as the Small Plates of Nephi. The first record and all ensuing secular additions to that record are generally called the Large Plates of Nephi, in reference to their number rather than their physical dimensions. Mormon would initially use the Large Plates of Nephi as the resource for his own composition. When he eventually discovered these Small Plates, he physically appended them to his own collection of plates because of his delight in them and the whisperings of the Spirit of God who commended the notion to him.

1.2.8—*language*—This is, no doubt, in reference to his written language, as can be inferred from the text following.

1.2.19—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

1.2.22—*Egyptians*—Egyptian writing in the sixth century before Christ would have been either “hieroglyphic” or “hieratic” in form. Scholars inform us that “hieroglyphic” or “sacred-carvings” came into use in Egypt during the early part of the third millennia before the birth of Jesus Christ. The “priestly” writing form, “hieratic” came into existence sometime before 1300 BC. “Demotic”, “Coptic”, and “Arabic” writing systems were not implemented in Egypt until long after Lehi and his family left Jerusalem. Later in the Book of Mormon, Moroni would refer to the Nephite form of writing with which he was familiar as “reformed Egyptian”, characters that had been modified according to their manner of speaking.

1.3 Nephi has confidence in his own writings for several reasons, not the least of which is the fact that he had lived those experiences about which he was writing. In addition he had the Large Plates which in some respects constitutes his “journal”, written as a first-person primary document. He could be accurate in producing the Small Plates thirty years after the fact because he had been accurate in the first instance when he had produced the Large Plates in that earlier period of his life. His testimony should commend his practice to us in our own record-keeping, that we might have a history as accurate as his because we were diligent from day to day recording our thoughts and experiences.

1.4 Here begins the synopsis of the record of Father Lehi which he wrote with his own hand. That record had been transferred to the Large Plates of Nephi for preservation after Nephi and his family had arrived in the Americas. When commanded to produce the Small Plates several years later, Nephi began this shorter but more religious account with the conversion and calling of his father to serve as a prophet of the Lord God of Israel.

1.4.11–12—*first year*—According to the chronologies produced by historians and other biblical scholars, the first year of the reign of Zedekiah began in 598 BC. As will be seen, however, the year must have been at least two years before. The time between Lehi’s departure from Jerusalem to the year of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ is consistently given as precisely 600 years. Assuming Jesus was born in Bethlehem on 6 April 1 BC, the departure from Jerusalem must have transpired no later than 600 BC. Inasmuch as we do not know the exact amount of time Lehi spent prophesying to the people of Jerusalem, we cannot

3 And I know that the record which I make is true; and I make it with mine own hand; and I make it according to my knowledge.

{~~9~~—1830}

4 For it came to pass in the commencement of the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah, (my father, Lehi, having dwelt at Jerusalem in all his days); and in that same year there came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent, or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed.

1 Ne. 1:4
JC 103
EM 1:145, 169,
171
EM 2:701

with certainty mark 600 BC as the first year of Zedekiah's reign. It may have been a year or more earlier.

- 1.4.17—*Zedekiah*—The last king of Judah before the Babylonian captivity. He was named Mattaniah by his parents, Josiah and Hamutal, but was renamed Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar at the age of twenty-one. When Zedekiah proved unsatisfactory during the eleventh year of his reign, most of the sons of the king were put to death as he stood with them, then the king of Babylon had Zedekiah's eyes thrust out. One of his sons had escaped the vengeance of Nebuchadnezzar, however, and with a group of supporters eventually crossed the ocean to settle in the land of Zarahemla. These Jewish colonists have been traditionally called the Mulekites. It was among the people of Mulek that the sole survivor of the Jaredite civilization, Corinatumr, lived out his last days. More than three hundred years later, the Nephites fleeing from the Lamanites would come in contact with the Mulekites in Zarahemla and the two peoples would become a single nation.
- 1.4.20—*Judah*—The fourth son of Jacob and Leah. The family of Judah would be given the responsibility to preside in Israel, beginning with the reign of David the King. His posterity would include the mortal Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will reign over the children of men throughout the Millennium and in the eternities. His name mean "praised, celebrated". The marriage of Judah to the daughter of Shuah took place about the year 2221, the year that Jacob returned to the land of Canaan and was living in Succoth east of the river Jordan. He was probably 19 at the time. We do not know why he did not marry while in the land of Padanaram. The daughter of Shuah died about the Adamic Year 2237, at which time Judah had his liaison with his widowed daughter-in-law Tamar, the result of which was the birth of Pharez and Zerah.
- 1.4.23—*Lehi*—The first prophet of the Lamanites and the Nephites who left the land of Jerusalem about the year 600 BC. Many of his experiences are recorded in the writings of his son, Nephi, engraved upon the Small Plates of Nephi.
- 1.4.27—*Jerusalem*—While Lehi had lived in the land of Jerusalem all of his days, his ancestors had dwelt in the northern kingdom of Israel until its destruction in 721 BC by the Assyrians. He and his family were of the tribe of Manasseh, the eldest son of Joseph the son of Jacob, and originally had their tribal inheritance north of the land of Judah.
- 1.4.39–40—*many prophets*—We know the names of perhaps three or four of these prophets. The most prominent was Jeremiah, he who dwelt in Jerusalem about the time the city of Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians. Obadiah and Habakkuk are thought to have lived about the same time. Ezekiel and Daniel, though prophesying about the time of Lehi's departure from Jerusalem, were actually already in captivity in the Mesopotamian Valley. There were undoubtedly many others in and around Jerusalem whose records we do not possess at this time.

1.5 Lehi had been persuaded by the words of the prophets that much needed to be done to redeem the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the Kingdom of Judah from destruction. This was a man who had a deep and abiding concern for the welfare of his fellow man.

- 1.5.1—*Wherefore*—This is a word which marks a conclusion (see 1.1.9). That is to say, Lehi went into his private place to pray, for and in behalf of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, because of the things which the

*5 Wherefore it came to pass that my father, Lehi, as he went forth prayed unto the Lord, yea, even with all his heart, in behalf of his people.

* p. 6

prophets had been testifying against them.

1.5.9—*Lehi*—The first prophet of the Lamanites and the Nephites who left the land of Jerusalem about the year 600 BC. Many of his experiences are recorded in the writings of his son, Nephi, engraved upon the Small Plates of Nephi.

1.6 Many comparisons come immediately to mind when contemplating the experience that Lehi has as he prays for the people of Jerusalem and Judea. Pillars of light are mentioned frequently in conjunction with the presence of God the Father and that of His Son. Angelic ministers are portrayed in much the same way. This dispensation opened with the appearance of a pillar of light upon the boy Joseph. Given the circumstances surrounding the adventures of Lehi's family that would shortly follow, however, it would seem reasonable to assume that what the grand patriarch experienced was something familiar to other prophets. Moses was called to his ministry by the voice of God from out of the burning bush, yet the pillar of fire would be most assuring to one who would be called upon to forsake that which he possessed in his adopted homeland in order to flee into a hostile wilderness. May we assume correctly that Lehi was offering up his petitions to God in the evening, rather than during the daylight hours?

1.6.45—*tremble*—We are forced to ask the question as to why Lehi would “quake and tremble”. Later in this narrative, Nephi testifies that those who need fear, tremble, and quake are those who belong to the kingdom of the devil, who are brought low into the dust, consumed as stubble (see 22.23). He certainly must have seen himself as part of a culture that was about to be inexorably destroyed. Lehi is advancing in his personal quest for redemption here.

1.7 From his retreat in the wilderness, Lehi returned to his own home, no doubt severely chastened by the vision that he had received. He had without question perceived the world and its wickedness, and the fact that he had not been completely unaffected by his association with that world. Like many, if not all of the prophets, Lehi came unto God only to discover his own weaknesses. The power of the Spirit revealed to him the consequences of recalcitrance in even the smallest of transgressions against the law of the Lord God of Israel.

1.7.14—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

1.8 Thus brought into the depths of humility, Lehi allowed the power of God to work upon him until the visions of eternity were opened to him. What pertinent revelations should be given to a man who was to be called upon to lead his family to a promised land half-way around the world? A general revelation, to be sure, like unto that which has been bestowed upon the faithful since the days of our first parents; the history of the creation of the earth and the destiny all things therein. Additionally there would have been specificity, clear instruction regarding himself and his immediate posterity. Who would have been these numberless concourses of premortal spirit children of God, if not the potential posterity of Lehi and his children?

{*¶*—1830}

6 And it came to pass as he prayed unto the Lord, there came a pillar of fire and dwelt upon a rock before him; and he saw and heard much; and because of the things which he saw and heard he did quake and tremble exceedingly.

1 Ne. 1:6
MD 279
EM 2:827
1 Ne. 1:6,9–11
CR87-A 33

{*¶*—1830}

7 And it came to pass that he returned to his own house at Jerusalem; and he cast himself upon his bed, being overcome with the Spirit and the things which he had seen.

1 Ne. 1:7–12
PM 604
1 Ne. 1:7–8
EM 3:1164

8 And being thus overcome with the Spirit, he was carried away in a vision, even that he saw the heavens open, and he thought he saw God sitting upon his throne, surrounded with numberless concourses of angels in the attitude of singing and praising their God.

1 Ne. 1:8
MD 823
DNCTC 2:444
DNCTC 3:538
PM 613
EM 1:212
1 Ne. 1:8–10
EM 2:464
1 Ne. 1:8–12
CR02-A 54

{*¶*—1830}

1.9 As to the identity of the One, there can be no doubt. What would be the relationship of the Lord Jesus Christ to Lehi and his posterity aside from the glorious effects of the atoning sacrifice? Would not the Son of God descend from the heavens shortly after his resurrection from the dead to give inspiration, guidance, and instruction to the Nephites gathered in the land of Bountiful after the great destruction in the western hemisphere?

1.9.9—*One*—Jesus Christ, the Savior of mankind, after his resurrection from the dead, clothed with the power and glory of God the Father.

1.10 Without becoming too mystical here, we might with some assurance be substantively informed by the imagery used in the vision. The glory of the “twelve others” differs from that of the One, as the stars differ from the sun. Jesus’ appearance to the Nephites is with a Celestial body; the ministry of the twelve is accomplished while yet in their telestial mortal bodies.

1.10.5–6—*twelve others*—At first blush we might be tempted to conclude that Father Lehi was shown the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb who ministered with Jesus during his mortal ministry. While these would be of interest to the patriarch, it would seem more probable that Lehi was given a vision of those among his own posterity who would be called up and ordained to minister to his children

1.11 Lehi had been moved by the words of the living prophets of his day to pray mightily for the welfare of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and environs. Here, with the vision of the “book”, he is commissioned to do more than just be an observer. He would bear witness of the truth to his countrymen; then he would flee the inevitable destruction of the land, preserving a record that would ultimately bless the lives of hundreds of millions.

1.11.28—*book*—Should we understand the “book” as being literal or metaphorical? If literal, this vision may very well be the initial prompting for Lehi to send his sons back to Jerusalem to retrieve the Brass Plates of Laban. These would have contained the writings of the prophets who had justly pronounced the doom about to fall upon the land of Israel. If metaphorical, we might understand the “book” to be like unto those given to both Ezekiel and John the Beloved, sweet to the taste, bitter to the belly, a book filled with lamentations, mourning, and woe. For both the prophet and the Apostle, it represented a mission to preach repentance to a fallen people.

1.12 Can there be anything more edifying in all of time and eternity than to contemplate and live the truth as it comes from the mouth of God the Father? As has been said many times before, the key to personal revelation is the study of the scriptures.

1.13 Ezekiel had been charged to call the House of Israel to repentance. The book that he had presented to him was filled within and without; lamentations, mourning, and woe. Lehi discovered no less in the book that had been given to him by the Savior in vision. There would be but few who would hearken to the voice of the living prophets in his day. Those who did so would be led away into places of safety and relative peace. Among them would be his own family.

1.13.8—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchize-

9 And it came to pass that he saw One descending out of the midst of heaven, and he beheld that his luster was above that of the sun at noon-day.

10 And he also saw twelve others following him, and their brightness did exceed that of the stars in the firmament.

11 And they came down and went forth upon the face of the earth; and the first came and stood before my father, and gave unto him a book, and bade him that he should read.

{*¶—1830*}

12 And it came to pass that as he read, he was filled with the Spirit of the Lord.

13 And he read, saying: Wo, wo, unto Jerusalem, for I have seen thine abominations! Yea, and many things did my father read concerning Jerusalem—that it should be destroyed, and the inhabitants thereof; many should perish by the sword, and many should be carried away captive into Babylon.

1 Ne. 1:8–20
EM 2:827
1 Ne. 1:9
EM 2:749
1 Ne. 1:9–10
DNCTC 1:210
1 Ne. 1:9–11
PM 522
MM 2:101
1 Ne. 1:10
EM 1:203
1 Ne. 1:10–11
EM 1:61

1 Ne. 1:12
CR93-O 20

dek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

1.13.48—*Babylon*—A great nation founded in the Mesopotamian valley closely associated with the Chaldean empire. It had risen to some economic importance by the time of the fall of Jericho to the Israelites under Joshua. The Babylonians would eventually become a world power, overrunning the whole of the Middle East. The threat of the Babylonian captivity would bring about the departure of several groups from the land of Israel, the most prominent in scripture being Lehi and his family, together with the associates of Mulek who eventually settled the land of Zarahemla. Babylon has become the metaphorical representation of materialism in the world of men.

1.14 It seems somewhat incongruous that while reading a book detailing the wickedness of Jerusalem and of its imminent destruction that Lehi would find something wherein to rejoice. Those who cannot conceive of the Heavens weeping at the fall of Lucifer, would undoubtedly have no difficulty assigning to Lehi a well-developed sense of justice, in that he seemingly took satisfaction in the elimination of the wicked. Those whose hearts have turned to the God of Heaven, however, perceive the children of men as He does, with faith, hope, and charity, sorrowing for their follies and sins, even when they are abused and tormented by those for whom they have been called to labor. Lehi’s joy can be found in his confidence that those who do repent will find forgiveness in this life and in the world to come. He has been touched by the love of God. He has every expectation that he and his family in the end will find salvation, temporally and spiritually. He also has every expectation that all those who will hearken to his own voice will likewise be blessed.

1.15 Although we cannot be absolutely certain, it may very well be that at this point in his prophetic career that Lehi was promised blessings unmeasured, similar to those extended to Abraham when he was called out of the land of Chaldea and assured by God that he would be made into a great nation in a land of promise.

1.16 The full account of Lehi’s genealogy, visions, dreams, and teachings had been written by the patriarch and preserved by Nephi until he had the opportunity to permanently incise them on to plates of durable metal. This he would do once the family arrived in the promised land. Lehi’s complete record was transferred to plates by Nephi some twenty years before the Small Plates were crafted. As he began his personal spiritual record of his life, Nephi chose those things from his father’s account which had direct bearing on his own religious experiences. The rest was adequately preserved on the Large Plates and he saw no need to slavishly duplicate them here.

1.16.4—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

1.17 Most scholars of the Book of Mormon conclude that the abridgement of

{9—1830}

14 And it came to pass that when my father had read and seen many great and marvelous things, he did exclaim many things unto the Lord; such as: Great and marvelous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty! Thy throne is high in the heavens, and thy power, and goodness, and mercy are over all the inhabitants of the earth; and, because thou art merciful, thou wilt not suffer those who come unto thee that they shall perish!

15 And after this manner was the language of my father in the praising of his God; for his soul did rejoice, and his whole heart was filled, because of the things which he had seen, yea, which the Lord had shown unto him.

16 And now I, Nephi, do not make a full account of the things which my father hath written, for he hath written many things which he saw in vis*ions and in dreams; and he also hath written many things which he prophesied and spake unto his children, of which I shall not make a full account.

17 But I shall make an account of

1 Ne 1:14
MD 30
DNTC 3:538
MM 1:17
1 Ne. 1:16
MD 208
1 Ne. 1:16–17
EM 2:827, 845
1 Ne. 1:17
MD 326
EM 2:854

* p. 7

the record of Lehi is found within the first eight chapters of the current edition. Yet it is clear that Nephi draws upon his father's account frequently as he progresses with the narration of his own life. Nephi does seem to announce, however, at the beginning of chapter 10 that he has, for the most part, completed the major synopsis of his father's text.

1.18 It should be understood that the book given to Lehi in the which he read of the impending destruction of his people, was more than a mere intellectual briefing about current affairs. Implicit was the calling to serve as a voluble spokesman for the Lord God of Israel, even though we do not have an account of the manner in which that formal call was extended. We are not told exactly when and where Lehi received the power and authority to preach repentance and the principles of salvation, but that he had that authority, there can be no question. The sacrifices offered up in the wilderness and throughout the history of the Nephite nation in the Americas were not accomplished by virtue of the Aaronic Priesthood, inasmuch as none of those in Lehi's party was of the priestly tribe. However, by possessing the higher, or Melchizedek Priesthood, the children of Lehi were able to attend to all of the requirements of the Law of Moses, and did so.

1.18.21—*Lehi*—The first prophet of the Lamanites and the Nephites who left the land of Jerusalem about the year 600 BC. Many of his experiences are recorded in the writings of his son, Nephi, engraved upon the Small Plates of Nephi.

1.18.27—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

1.19 Lehi rebuked the Jews for their wickedness as had the other prophets called to administer to the falling nation. At the mention of their personal sins, the inhabitants of Jerusalem found him as amusing as the others who had preceded him. As has been the case throughout the history of the world, the wicked saw no direct connection between their religious life and their political success. For them there was an eternal separation of Church and State; the one did not and could not impinge upon the other. And thus the nations of the earth have fallen into ruin under the weight of the corruption of their individual citizens. Why is it when a people are accused of heinous crimes against themselves and their God they often choose to make mock? How is it when a plan is presented for them to receive a remission of those sins they become infuriated? It is not because with the former they need do nothing but laugh, but with the latter they must change the very nature of their existence?

1.19.8—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

1.19.57—*Messiah*—The Hebrew word “Messiah” refers to the “Anointed

my proceedings in my days. Behold, I make an abridgment of the record of my father, upon plates which I have made with mine own hands; wherefore, after I have abridged the record of my father then will I make an account of mine own life.

{*¶*—1830}

18 Therefore, I would that ye should know, that after the Lord had shown so many marvelous things unto my father, Lehi, yea, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, behold he went forth among the people, and began to prophesy and to declare unto them concerning the things which he had both seen and heard.

{*¶*—1830}

19 And it came to pass that the Jews did mock him because of the things which he testified of them; for he truly testified of their wickedness and their abominations; and he testified that the things which he saw and heard, and also the things which he read in the book, manifested plainly of the coming of a Messiah, and also the redemption of the world.

1 Ne. 1:19
PM 82
EM 2:749, 827
EM 3:1165
CR87-A 33
CR93-A 34
1 Ne. 1:19–20
PM 38

One”, he who would redeem the House of Israel from physical death and spioritual depravity. The Greek “Christ” is a direct translation of “Messiah”.

1.20 Lehi’s announcement regarding the destruction of the city was met with scorn and derision, much in the same fashion that the people of Ammonihah ridiculed Alma and Amulek for predicting that their city was ripe for destruction. In both cases there were deep political entanglements which made such an overthrow nigh unto impossible. The leadership of the Kingdom of Judah thought that they were effectively courted by both major world powers with interests in the Middle East: the Babylonians and the Egyptians. Complete destruction was inconceivable. What seemed most ridiculous to the Jews was the thought that their personal conduct had anything at all to do with the course of nations. Yet when Lehi clearly taught them that there was not only room for improvement, but that a way had been provided whereby they might change their way of life, they were livid, and murderously so. The wicked are like those in a deep sleep who have no desire to be awakened. When shaken, they are agitated; when aroused, they become angry. Sin is pleasant and comfortable to those who have succumbed to its allure.

1.20.4—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

1.20.18—*prophets*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

1.20.45—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

1.20.52–53—*tender mercies*—When one contemplates the manner in which Lehi and his family were taught, watched over, and protected during their sojourn in the wilderness, their successes against terrible odds in obeying the word of the Lord, their survival upon the vastness of the great seas, and their prosperity in a long abandoned land, then one begins to comprehend the significance of the phrase, “tender mercies of the Lord”.

2.1 Why the Lord God chooses one method of communicating over another while instructing His servants is part of His own economy. Why He chose to reveal his will in differing fashions to Lehi is left to our imagination as well. Lehi first experiences an open apparition of a pillar of fire while he prayed for the people of Jerusalem (see 1.5–6). Secondly, he is transported into a vision wherein he has future history revealed to him with elements both literal and metaphorical (see 1.7–14). Here, in a dream, the Lord specifies precisely what Lehi is to ask of his wife and children. In these methods, plus others that might be enumerated, the one receiving revelation must be a man or woman

{*¶*—1830}

20 And when the Jews heard these things they were angry with him; yea, even as with the prophets of old, whom they had cast out, and stoned, and slain; and they also sought his life, that they might take it away. But behold, I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender mercies of the Lord are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the power of deliverance.

1 Ne. 1:20
AF 50
EM 1:145
EM 3:1004
CR86-O 72

{Chapter I, continued}
(Chapter 2)

{*¶*—1830}

1 FOR behold, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto my father, yea, even in a dream, and said unto him: 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

1 Ne. 2
EM 1:145, 186,
187, 188, 213
EM 2:855
CR95-O 110
CR02-O 67
1 Ne. 2:1–5
EM 2:827
1 Ne. 2:1–2

of faith and filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost.

2.1.23—*Blessed*—Lehi was blessed because he was willing to enter in upon the mission which the Lord had given him. He bore fervent testimony to the people of Jerusalem that their conduct was found wanting; he gave his witness of the coming of the Messiah who would redeem the fallen of this world if they would but exercise faith, repent of their sins, and receive the ordinances which the Lord had extended to them. For his pains, his life was sought. The God of Heaven then required an extension of that mission in connection with his posterity and the posterity of Ishmael and Mulek.

2.1.26—*Lehi*—The first prophet of the Lamanites and the Nephites who left the land of Jerusalem about the year 600 BC. Many of his experiences are recorded in the writings of his son, Nephi, engraved upon the Small Plates of Nephi.

2.2 The instructions to Lehi were not only clear as to the direction of his journey, but the Lord undoubtedly was specific as to the nature and duration of the journey, that it was to be permanent.

2.2.26—*wilderness*—The name of that wilderness is not directly articulated here, but at some point the Lord must have told Lehi precisely where he was to go: into the ancient land of Midian, where the Lawgiver Moses had been tutored at the feet of his father-in-law Jethro for forty years. A wilderness is uninhabited and uncultivated, but is not necessarily barren. In the United States in the early 1800s, a “wilderness” was specific to forests; most Americans understood, however, that the “wilderness” in scriptural terms referred to the semi-arid regions of the Arabian peninsula.

2.3 Obedience is not merely an assent of the mind, that the instruction seems good and wholesome; obedience is the act of conforming the actions of one’s everyday life to the substance of the law received and acknowledged.

2.4 All of that which would have been considered of great value in the days of the patriarch perforce was left behind. All that was packed away was that which was destined to preserve their lives for the next several years. The land meant nothing; the gold, silver, and “precious things” would merely have been burdensome. Scholars have speculated that because Lehi’s inheritance would have pertained to those of the northern ten tribes, that his holdings in Jerusalem and environs were tenuous at best. According to the Law of Moses, during the year of the Jubilee, any lands sold to those not belonging to a particular tribe would have to be returned to the original owners. How much time remained of the “lease” we cannot at present know. There was a provision, however, that if a house in a walled city was not redeemed during the first year after the sale, buyer might retain possession forever. Lehi and his family may have gained a permanent foothold in the land of Judea, but we cannot speak with assurance as to how or where. We are not told how Lehi made his living, but some modern readers have suggested that his facility with traveling in the wilderness may indicate that he was a merchant more than a keeper of flocks and herds or a husbandman with fields to tend. With a little thought, one would have to agree that all of those skills would become useful as the family traversed first Arabia and then as they established themselves in

life.

{*¶*—1830}

2 And it came to pass that the Lord commanded my father, even in a dream, that he should take his family and depart into the wilderness.

3 And it came to pass that he was obedient unto the word of the Lord, wherefore he did as the Lord commanded him.

{*¶*—1830}

4 And it came to pass that he departed into the wilderness. And he left his house, and the land of his inheritance, and his gold, and his silver, and his precious things, and took nothing with him, save it were his family, and provisions, and tents, and departed into the wilderness.

MD 208

1 Ne. 2:2–4
AF 227
MD 201
DS 1:162
JC 103

1 Ne. 2:4
EM 1:171

the land of Lehi. Only in shipbuilding did they require direct instruction.

2.4.11—*wilderness*—The name of that wilderness is not directly articulated here, but at some point the Lord must have told Lehi precisely where he was to go: into the ancient land of Midian, where the Lawgiver Moses had been tutored at the feet of his father-in-law Jethro for forty years. A wilderness is uninhabited and uncultivated, but is not necessarily barren. In the United States in the early 1800s, a “wilderness” was specific to forests; most Americans understood, however, that the “wilderness” in scriptural terms referred to the semi-arid regions of the Arabian peninsula.

2.4.44—*provisions*—The English word “provisions” derives from roots which mean “foresight”, to supply one’s self with necessities for the foreseeable future, usually having to do with victuals.

2.5 The distance from the city of Jerusalem to the northern shore of the Gulf of Akabah is in excess of 150 miles. The possibility of traversing that distance in three days, with food and equipment sufficient for a long journey, seems highly unlikely. Therefore, any reference to time must be in conjunction with the distance traveled after they arrived at what is now known as Enzion-geber. Assuming that the three days journey began after Lehi and his family left the King’s Highway, as they made their way along the eastern shore of the Gulf of Akabah, they would have traveled about half of the distance between the road and the southwestern tip of the Land of Midian where they camped for a season, or about sixty miles.

2.5.13–14—*Red Sea*—That is to say, that tongue of the Egyptian sea that separates Egypt from the Arabian peninsula. The southern border of Israel.

2.5.44—*Sariah*—The wife of Lehi and the mother of the family that eventually inherited the land of promise in what is now known as the western hemisphere.

2.5.51—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

2.5.52—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites

2.5.54—*Sam*—The third son of Lehi and Sariah who tended to follow the direction of his younger brother Nephi. He and his posterity were considered generally to be Nephites.

2.6 Twenty-six hundred years have passed since Lehi and his family traversed this part of the Arabian Peninsula. We can only guess at the climactic conditions that may have existed there at that time. Today, the rivers of Arabia are not perennial, but do flow during certain times of the rainy season. If the conditions today are comparable to 600 BC then we might guess that Lehi’s departure into the wilderness would have been during the rainy season, what there was of it.

2.7 The altar and the offering upon that altar would have been performed under the auspices of the Melchizedek Priesthood and not the Aaronic. Animal sacrifice was in similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, about whom Lehi already knew a great deal.

5 And he came down by the *borders near the shore of the Red Sea; and he traveled in the wilderness in the borders which are nearer the Red Sea; and he did travel in the wilderness with his family, which consisted of my mother, Sariah, and my elder brothers, who were Laman, Lemuel, and Sam.

{~~9~~—1830}

6 And it came to pass that when he had traveled three days in the wilderness, he pitched his tent in a valley by the side of a river of water.

7 And it came to pass that he built an altar of stones, and made an offering unto the Lord, and gave thanks unto the Lord our God.

* p. 8
1 Ne. 2:5
EM 1:144

1 Ne. 2:7
AF 453
MD 31
EM 1:188

2.7.10–12—*altar of stones*—According to the Law the altar could be made of compacted earth or of unfinished stone. Presumably, the stone altar would have been considered more permanent. Like the covenant people in every age, Lehi built his places of worship as if he were going to be encamped for an extended period of time. We can be quite certain that he knew that it would not be the case notwithstanding his efforts.

2.8 The naming of the valley and the river has brought out the very best and worst in the hearts and minds of the students of the Book of Mormon. Why did Father Lehi choose these particular similes to represent the spiritual status of his two rebellious sons? Was he speaking in earnest expectation, or was he being ironic?

2.8.14—*Laman*—A river in the wilderness south of Jerusalem that was named after the eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

2.8.20–21—*Red Sea*—If our calculations have been correct, the river and valley would have been on the eastern coast of the Gulf of Akabah about half way from Enzion-geber and the southwest corner of the Land of Midian. Some scholars have suggested that perhaps the valley and river were farther south, east of the great prominence located on the jut of land which defines the beginning of the gulf of Akabah. That, however, would have required Lehi and his family to travel in excess of thirty miles per day without modern conveyance in an inhospitable land.

2.9 Unless we accuse Lehi of rather a mocking kind of sarcasm, the river Laman must have appeared to have been a steady stream while they were encamped there. The image of the river and the sea is a powerful one. Lehi perceives the ocean, for the purposes of his metaphor, to be the great body of righteousness conduct of which mankind is capable. Laman might have thought of himself as relatively unimportant when compared to the vast waters of the Red Sea, but Lehi wished him to do his part manfully, consistent and unwavering.

2.9.18–19—*Red Sea*—If our calculations have been correct, the river and valley would have been on the eastern coast of the Gulf of Akabah about half way from Enzion-geber and the southwest corner of the Land of Midian. Some scholars have suggested that perhaps the valley and river were farther south, east of the great prominence located on the jut of land which defines the beginning of the gulf of Akabah. That, however, would have required Lehi and his family to travel in excess of thirty miles per day without modern conveyance in an inhospitable land.

2.9.23—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

2.10 Lemuel, Lehi’s second son, was compared to the valley in which they had pitched their tents. We may wax cynical, if we choose, and point out that of all places on earth, that region is inordinately beset by earthquakes. It is in this

8 And it came to pass that he called the name of the river, Laman, and it emptied into the Red Sea; and the valley was in the borders near the mouth thereof.

{~~9~~—1830}

9 And when my father saw that the waters of the river emptied into the fountain of the Red Sea, he spake unto Laman, saying: O that thou mightest be like unto this river, continually running into the fountain of all righteousness!

10 And he also spake unto Lemuel: O that thou mightest be like unto this valley, firm and

1 Ne. 2:9–10
MM 1:363
EM 1:183
CR01-A 36

place where the continents of Africa, Europe, and Asia come together, the tectonic plates of each constantly rubbing and shifting against one another. Yet, Lehi was in the business of attempting to restore his sons to a proper frame of mind, that their hearts might be softened sufficiently that they might hear the voice of the Lord and find forgiveness for their rebellions. Sarcasm is not part of any healing process.

2.10.6—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites

2.11 The accusations against Lehi made by his eldest sons will have a reprise later in the criticisms of his own wife, Sariah, when their sons have been absent far too long in her estimation (see 5.1–3 below). It is clear that in their experience, the two eldest sons of Lehi and Sariah were not spiritual men. They found their father’s visions and dreams irrational and without merit. The sacrifice of their material wealth drove them to distraction. Like many of their kind, Laman and Lemuel believed that wealth was a marker of success and, like the Zoramites and others, a marker of their acceptability before God. To abandon their wealth was to abandon any potential power that they might have had among their neighbors. Since they were the eldest, they thought to be the beneficiaries of their father’s wealth. With that wealth for all practical purposes having been discarded, their status and prospects were considerably reduced. The journey into the wilderness was to forsake all hope. Death and destruction awaited them there through thirst, starvation, and marauding villains. They knew little or nothing of the great spiritual knowledge which their father had acquired and, thus, were guilty of the foolish imaginations of which they accused Lehi.

2.11.8—*stiffneckedness*—The definition of “stiffneckedness” in American English in 1828 is “stubborn, inflexibly obstinate, contumacious”. Isaiah’s imagery “thy neck is an iron sinew” is apt. Laman and Lemuel were determined to go on in their own way, neither turning to the left or the right, not even looking about them to see if there were a better way to conduct themselves.

2.11.10—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

2.11.12—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

2.11.39—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

2.12 Laman and Lemuel were carnally minded, viewing the world according to their senses and reason. They did not accept the notion that a man could know of future events through the gift of prophecy. Therefore, they would look at the prosperity of Jerusalem and of the Kingdom of Judah and conclude that all was well. Like the people of Ammonihah, it was incomprehensible that

steadfast, and immovable in keeping the commandments of the Lord!

11 Now this he spake because of the stiffneckedness of Laman and Lemuel; for behold they did murmur in many things against their father, because he was a visionary man, and had led them out of the land of Jerusalem, to leave the land of their inheritance, and their gold, and their silver, and their precious things, to perish in the wilderness. And this they said he had done because of the foolish imaginations of his heart.

1 Ne. 2:11–16
EM 2:977
1 Ne. 2:11
EM 2:801
CR89-O 103
1 Ne. 2:12
CR86-O 70
CR89-O 104
CR99-O 4
1 Ne. 2:13
CR99-O 5

12 And thus Laman and Lemuel, being the eldest, did murmur against their father. And they did murmur because they knew not the dealings of that God who had

a nation and people could be utterly destroyed.

2.12.3—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

2.12.5—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

2.13 The Jews considered themselves to be a covenant people, protected and sustained by the hand of the Lord God Jehovah. They were, by definition, self-righteous, assuming that whatever they did was right. Lehi’s criticisms rankled them, upset their sensibilities, and disturbed their peace. His reminders of the coming Messiah drove them to murderous rage, because the need for a Messiah implied personal and national sin in a scriptural venue. Laman and Lemuel had partaken of that same false nationalistic spirit and chaffed at their father’s disturbing observations about them through his observation regarding their friends. Other children have similarly taken umbrage at parental observations regarding their associates.

2.13.6—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

2.13.19—*prophets*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

2.13.23—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

2.14 Nephi is somewhat circumspect in his delineation of the rebellions of his older brothers, implying that they were verbal. Yet, it is clear that Laman and Lemuel were plotting against his life in some fashion, no doubt with an intention of returning to Jerusalem to resume their former lives with gusto. Although this extraordinary chastisement quelled the proactive conspiracy of Laman and Lemuel for a time, yet the embers of their rebellion were often stirred into flame when adversity distressed them or when the specter of inconvenience arose. An angel would severely rebuke them for their treatment of their younger brothers after the initial failure with Laban in Jerusalem. Nephi himself would expose them to the wrath of God through his own person when they were about to send him to his death in the depths of the sea once they reached the land which they called Bountiful in southern Arabia. Upon the waters of the vast ocean, making their way toward the promised land, they would rebel once more, persisting even in the face of certain destruction for having done so. Eventually, after the death of their father Lehi, Laman and Lemuel, together with their fellow conspirators, would seek to bring Nephi and his followers into slavery or destruction. They were frequently cowed into obedience by the power of God, but their hearts and minds were little

created them.

13 Neither did they believe that Jerusalem, that great city, could be destroyed according to the words of the prophets. And they were like unto the Jews who were at Jerusalem, who sought to take away the life of my father.

{~~9~~—1830}

14 And it came to pass that my father did speak unto them in the valley of Lemuel, with power, being filled with the Spirit, until their frames did shake before him. And he did confound them, that they durst not utter against him; wherefore, they did as he commanded them.

affected.

2.14.17—*Lemuel*—A valley named after the second son of Lehi and Sariah. He was for the most part of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

2.15 Notwithstanding the permanence of the altar by which they offered sacrifice and worshipped the Lord God, Lehi did nothing to make permanent dwellings for himself and his family. He knew that it would be a waste of time, energy and means.

2.16 We do not know exactly how old Nephi was at the time that his family departed into the desert. If we assume for the sake of argument that the older boys were following the traditional track on the road to manhood, they probably would have been married by the time they were twenty-one years of age or so. If Laman were barely of age, then we might suspect that Lemuel and Sam were 19 and 17 respectively, Nephi perhaps being only 15. Certainly Nephi would qualify as one who was “exceedingly young”. Since he was physically precocious, he apparently could pass for an adult at times.

2.16.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

2.16.29—*wherefore*—Because Nephi was young and had desires to know of God and his economy, he concluded that prayer was the appropriate course to follow.

2.17 Nephi’s heart was softened because he prayed with sincerity and real intent unto the God of Heaven, that he might know for himself. We can easily imagine what might have happened to the youngest child in the family had he not taken himself to prayer. The fact that Sam, Nephi’s older brother, was willing to listen to what Nephi had to say, reveals a great deal about a man about whom we otherwise know so little. His family will become so closely identified with Nephi’s that no distinction is made between them after the first generation.

2.17.5—*Sam*—The third son of Lehi and Sariah who tended to follow the direction of his younger brother Nephi. He and his posterity were considered generally to be Nephites.

2.17.22—*Spirit*—Note that the rest of verse 17 is to be found in the next paragraph.

2.18 It is interesting that in the format of the first edition of the Book of Mormon Sam’s acceptance of Nephi’s words is sharply contrasted with the refusal of Laman and Lemuel to give heed to him. Once Nephi’s own heart has been softened it is relatively easy for him to perceive the hardness of heart in others, a revelation which brings sorrow to his soul. He is concerned because he has learned for himself the difference between the two states of mind, and that one is preferable over the other. He prays for his brethren that they, too, might become illuminated. In this small example, we see manifested the attitude of God the Father and of His Son. Having learned for themselves the blessings and benefits of adhering to the truth, they wish others to be benefited as well. So compelling is that desire that they are willing to do wonderfully extraordinary things in order to entice the rest of humanity to participate in all that is good.

15 And my father dwelt in a tent.

{¶—1830}

16 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, being exceedingly young, nevertheless being large in stature, and also having great desires to know of the mysteries of God, wherefore, I did cry unto the Lord; and behold he did visit me, and did soften my *heart that I did believe all the words which had been spoken by my father; wherefore, I did not rebel against him like unto my brothers.

17 And I spake unto Sam, making known unto him the things which the Lord had manifested unto me by his Holy Spirit.

{¶—1830}

And it came to pass that he believed in my words.

18 But, behold, Laman and Lemuel would not hearken unto my words; and being grieved because of the hardness of their hearts I cried unto the Lord for them.

1 Ne. 2:15
EM 1:188

1 Ne. 2:16
AGQ 2:9
CR80-A 55
CR85-A 54
CR88-A 28
CR88-O 18
* p. 9
CR99-A 19

- 2.18.3—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.
- 2.18.5—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.
- 2.18.18—*hardness*—In speaking of the regeneration of the House of Israel, the Lord says through Ezekiel that he would “take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh”. The hardening of one’s heart comes as a direct result of not repenting immediately when one has committed sin. Sin results in grief and pain, and those who choose not to repent must quench the pain by becoming insensitive, or “hardening” their heart so that it can no longer feel.

{9—1830}

2.19 What may we say of a man who has been told directly by God that he is acceptable before him, that his course in life thus far has been acceptable? Can we not say that this is a man who has faith unto salvation? We must keep in mind what precipitated the Lord’s verbal approbation of Nephi’s conduct. It is because he was seeking the best for his brethren, even though they would not hearken to anything that he had to say. Nephi was as concerned about Laman and Lemuel as he was about himself, a quality which cannot be lightly dismissed. Nephi had arrived at the core of Christian values in his spiritual journey toward God.

19 And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto me, saying: Blessed art thou, Nephi, because of thy faith, for thou hast sought me diligently, with lowliness of heart.

2.19.16—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

2.20 Nephi had been seeking for a blessing for and in behalf of the recalcitrant members of his family and received a magnificent blessing for himself and his posterity. This had not been his motive, but it was the direct result. The land of promise which he was to receive was the very same that had been promised to his own father sometime before. May we not see in operation a similar covenant being instituted between God and Nephi as that which God had extended to Lehi?

20 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.

1 Ne. 2:20
MD 855
DS 3:73
TSWK 403
EM 3:1160
CR85-A 16
CR86-A 34
CR02-O 42

2.21 When Laman and Lemuel rebelled against Lehi or Nephi, they were in fact rebelling against God, whether or not they were consciously aware of the malignancy of their actions. In this declaration, the Lord was telling Nephi that his words, his counsel, his revelations would be like unto Moses the Law-giver. The subsequent history of the Lamanites clearly depicts the precise fulfillment of this prophecy.

21 And inasmuch as thy brethren shall rebel against thee, they shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord.

1 Ne. 2:20–23
EM 1:378
1 Ne. 2:21–22
EM 2:801
1 Ne. 2:21–24
MD 428

2.22 The time would ultimately come where Nephi’s personal obedience to the word of the Lord would prepare him to be a leader and teacher of the family. A portion of his family, notably Laman and Lemuel and their families, would refuse to follow his direction, direction that came directly from God the Father. Therefore, by their own recalcitrance they cut themselves off from the blessings of the Lord, falling into darkness and depravity.

22 And inasmuch as thou shalt keep my commandments, thou shalt be made a ruler and a teacher over thy brethren.

1 Ne. 2:22
MD 88, 776
EM 1:160

2.23 The promise to Nephi was that his posterity would continue; the civili-

23 For behold, in that day that

1 Ne. 2:23–25

zation that would bear his name, would survive so long as his people chose to obey the voice of the Lord through His servants. Once they forsook the providence of God, they would be laid open to destruction at the hands of the Lamanites. The Lamanites as a people would endure in any event.

2.23.13—*curse*—We might speak at length regarding the nature of the “curse” which befell the posterity of Laman and Lemuel, but we needs be careful that we do not confuse the “curse” with the outward token of that curse. The Lamanites and those who associated themselves with them were cursed indeed, as the Lord has said: they were cut off from his presence, not enjoying His spirit. The Spirit of the Lord is a comforter. What happens to a people when they have no ease, no rest, no peace, but are in a state of continual agitation, anxiety, and distress? They are, simply put, in a living hell

2.24 The whole history contained in the Book of Mormon is replete with instances where the fallen righteous are afflicted by those whom they considered outside of the pale of salvation. There are continuing cycles of apostasy, sorrow, repentance, and redemption, powered by the awaiting Lamanites who were ready at any time to cry havoc against the Nephites. When the Nephites rebelled, they too descended into the hell of their own making, cursed, cut off from the presence of their God.

3.1 We do not know where Nephi went to offer up the desires of his heart in behalf of his brethren. Did he have his own separate quarters where he might have some privacy or did he go into the wilderness a short distance? We may not know at this point, but suffice it to say that Nephi had learned for himself what it was like to be as his father was. Lehi had petitioned the Lord regarding the people of Jerusalem, his people; Nephi had done the same. Lehi had received a commission from the Lord; now Nephi, too, was under a covenant with stipulations and promises.

3.1.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

3.2 Nephi was promised that if he were obedient to the voice of the Lord that he and his posterity would be blessed. The difference between Nephi and his two older brothers was that he had learned for himself, through prayer, that Lehi’s voice was as the voice of the Lord. Nephi would become a ruler and a teacher of his brethren because he had first been subject to divine authority and a student of the mind and will of God through his father. This is the way the Kingdom of God is established and prospered and there is no other way to obtain true happiness in this life.

3.2.32—*return*—The trip through the wilderness from the tent of Lehi to the city of Jerusalem was certainly in excess of two hundred miles and may have been considerably more. The task must have taken close to a month, at best, to accomplish that which had been asked of them to do, the majority of the time in grueling travel through a parched and

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.

24 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.

{Chapter I, continued}
(Chapter 3)

{¶—1830}

1 AND it came to pass that I, Nephi, returned from speaking with the Lord, to the tent of my father.

2 And it came to pass that he spake unto me, saying: Behold I have dreamed a dream, in the which the Lord hath commanded me that thou and thy brethren shall return to Jerusalem.

MD 17

1 Ne. 3
MD 103
DS 2:198
TSWK 527
EM 1:141, 142,
145, 187, 198,
213, 217
EM 2:701, 827,
855
EM 3:1005
CR95-O 110
CR99-O 6
CR02-O 6
1 Ne. 3:1–7
CR86-A 48
1 Ne. 3:2
MD 208
EM 1:180

merciless land.

3.2.34—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

3.3 Why Laban was in possession of the Brass Plates we may not know. Many students of the Book of Mormon have postulated opinions, but none with any degree of certainty. That he was a wealthy, arrogant, and acquisitive aristocrat from one of the tribes of Joseph we may easily discern.

3.3.3—*Laban*—We will soon discover that Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

3.3.6–9—*record of the Jews*—A concerted study of the Book of Mormon reveals that the Brass Plates contained a great deal of material which was borrowed from the record being kept by the Kingdom of Judah. Certainly much of the history and teachings of the prophets since the destruction of the northern Kingdom of Israel in 721 BC would have been preserved in the Brass Plates. We are not told who began that metallic record, but it seems likely that the impetus may have been Joseph himself. Many of the writings of the prophets prior to the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel were included on the Plates as well, writings which were probably not available to the scribes of the southern Kingdom of Judah. Thus, the Brass Plates did contain a record of the Jews, but much more, in the end, was to be discovered engraven upon the plates.

3.3.13—*genealogy*—The Brass Plates was a true Book of Remembrance, of family history and that which made the family possible, the covenants and principles of salvation and exaltation.

3.3.24—*brass*—Much has been written regarding the possible nature of the material used in producing the Brass Plates. Technically speaking, the difference between brass and bronze is that in the former, copper is smelted with zinc, whereas with the latter, copper is smelted with tin. The amount of zinc in brass determines hardness and malleability. Also, the greater percentage of zinc in the alloy, the greater the gold-colored tint. Lead added to the alloy makes the metal softer; addition of tin increases the metal’s resistance to corrosion. Scholars insist that brass would not have existed in the time of Lehi, but is an alloy that dates only from Roman times. Bronze, assert the learned, must have been the alloy used in the production of the Brass Plates. These same scholars, however, have their arguments seriously diluted, even in modern times, when it is revealed that the metals so tightly defined in their lexicons are, in reality, severely muddled in the minds of historians. The English word “bronze” derives from French and Latin roots, and perhaps refers to an ancient seaport in southeastern Italy, Brindisi, famed for its copper alloys. The English word “brass” derives from Germanic and Celtic roots which may have their sources, so say the historical linguists, in both the Hebrew and Phoenician languages. Given the setting, which would be the more appropriate word to use to translate into

3 For behold, Laban hath the record of the Jews and also a genealogy of my forefathers, and they are engraven upon plates of brass.

1 Ne. 3:3
MD 103

English the name of an ancient record made of copper alloy? In the 1828 Webster's Dictionary, both the subtleties and the confusions of these two words are explicit. It gives one pause to think that an uneducated farm boy chose the culturally correct term in his translation. This will not be the last time.

3.4 The instructions from the Lord to Lehi regarding the acquisition of the Brass Plates could not have been clearer. It is intriguing that the Lord chose to send four young men in their late teens and early twenties to accomplish such an extraordinarily important task. A moment's reflection, however, would reveal that the Lord God of Heaven has in these latter days frequently assigned similarly difficult and essential tasks to the same age group.

3.4.18—*Laban*—We will soon discover that Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

3.5 We do not know the attitude of Sam at this point, but we might clearly assume that the "brothers" spoken of here are Laman and Lemuel. Because these two have not prayed to know the will of God, they have not been softened in their hearts. Because they are not receptive to the promptings of the Spirit of God, they cannot know that the request being made of them is of divine origin. Therefore, they perceive the task as more than inconvenient; it is onerous in the extreme. It is fascinating to note that there will be no such squeamishness when Ishmael and his daughters are the ones to be persuaded.

3.6 Had Laman and Lemuel refused to attempt the retrieval of the Brass Plates from Laban? The context of this verse seems to indicate that Nephi, the youngest of the four, has been given the task, even if he has to do it alone. This, as will be seen, he solemnly agrees to do. When Nephi made his preparations to go into the wilderness back to Jerusalem, were the older brothers shamed into accompanying him? This might explain some of the heel-dragging and whining on their part that ensues during the adventure. Notwithstanding the company of the older brothers, it will be Nephi that will be "favored" in his attempt to obtain the Plates, because he is a man of faith and will hearken to the voice of the Spirit that will lead him along from place to place.

3.7 Nephi is hardly more than a boy, notwithstanding he was physically developed. From whence did he learn this principle? It is more than intellectual acceptance of the concept that is being expressed here. Nephi will "do" what his father and the Lord have asked him to accomplish because he "knows". From subsequent exchanges between Nephi and his older brothers we learn that Nephi is not ignorant of the history of the House of Israel. He will cite from that history frequently, even before they acquire the Brass Plates from Laban. He knows the history of Moses and the Exodus from Egypt. Has he as yet made the connection between the experience of his father with the pillar of fire and that of the Israelites as they fled Egypt, watched over and protected by day and night by similar pillars? If Moses and the Israelites could accomplish such a wonderful and prosperous escape from the most powerful nation on the earth at the time, why should they not be able to obtain a singular book from the hands of their kinsman? This is the faith of Nephi that will insure their success.

4 Wherefore, the Lord hath commanded me that thou and thy brothers should go unto the house of Laban, and seek the records, and bring them down hither into the wilderness.

5 And now, behold thy brothers murmur, saying it is a hard thing which I have required of them; but behold I have not required it of them, but it is a commandment of the Lord.

6 Therefore go, my son, and thou shalt be favored of the Lord, because thou hast not murmured.

{*¶*—1830}

7 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, said unto my father: I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the *children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.

1 Ne. 3:4
CR02-A 37

1 Ne. 3:5
CR90-O 106

1 Ne. 3:6
CR89-O 40
1 Ne. 3:6-7
CR90-O 106

1 Ne. 3:7
AGQ 4:111
TSWK 574
FPM (18)
EM 3:1021, 1074
* p. 10
CR80-A 89, 126
CR80-O 121
CR81-O 132
CR83-O 88
CR84-A 21, 35,
76, 96
CR85-A 100
CR85-O 108
CR87-A 50

3.7.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

3.8 The refusal of his elder sons to make the journey to Jerusalem must have come as a great disappointment to Father Lehi. He perceived the hardness of their hearts, their lack of faith, and their waning spirituality. What a relief it must have been to Lehi to discover in his youngest son the beginnings of greatness. The power of God must have been upon the boy, else how could he have not been cowed by the recalcitrance of his siblings?

3.9 As was suggested above (see 3.6), Nephi’s willingness to go forward with the divine mission to retrieve the Brass Plates either shamed or emboldened his older brothers,

3.9.3—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

3.9.15—*tents*—This is not a mere walk in the park. The trip to Jerusalem and back would require the better part of a month and there were no hostels every twenty miles along their track.

3.9.23—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

3.10 In consulting one with another, the four young men were attempting to come to some sort of agreement as to how to proceed. We may only speculate as to how the decision was made. It may be assumed that some element of chance was involved, inasmuch as the wording of the following verse almost demands such a method.

3.10.16—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

3.11 Again, the method for deciding that Laman should be the one to attend to the task is unknown. Did they vote by ballot? Did they manipulate stones or sticks, as some scholars have suggested? Was the method formal or informal? We have no way of knowing.

3.11.3–4—*cast lots*—The Greek word which is translated as “cast lots” in the New Testament (see *JN-C 19.24.12–13*) derives from roots which mean to “determine, lot, receive”. The manner of determination is not specified, even though there have been commentators perfectly willing to do so. The Hebrew word employed in Psalms 22:18 for “lot” literally

{*¶*—1830}

8 And it came to pass that when my father had heard these words he was exceedingly glad, for he knew that I had been blessed of the Lord.

9 And I, Nephi, and my brethren took our journey in the wilderness, with our tents, to go up to the land of Jerusalem.

{*¶*—1830}

10 And it came to pass that when we had gone up to the land of Jerusalem, I and my brethren did consult one with another.

11 And we cast lots—who of us should go in unto the house of Laban. And it came to pass that the lot fell upon Laman; and Laman went in unto the house of Laban, and he talked with him as he sat in his house.

CR87-O 93
CR88-A 8, 51, 5
CR89-O 40
CR90-A 100
CR93-A 54
CR94-A 56
CR94-O 5
CR95-O 5
CR96-A 35
CR97-O 104
CR98-O 76
CR99-O 6
CR00-A 54
CR01-A 84
CR01-O 34, 65
CR02-A 37, 62
CR02-O 67
1 Ne. 3:7–8
CR87-A 80
1 Ne. 3:9–12
EM 3:1418

1 Ne. 3:11
MD 458

means “to be rough (as a stone), pebble, portion, destiny”. The English word “lot”, as might be expected, is defined as an object (a piece of wood, pebble, die, straw) used to determine an issue by chance fall or choice. Needless to say there was a myriad of Hebrew ways for “casting lots”. Notwithstanding the forgoing, we are no closer to identifying the manner in which Nephi and his brethren decided who was to be the one to approach Laban for the Brass Plates.

3.11.15—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

3.11.26—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

3.12 The approach of Laman seems to be a request for genealogical records, rather than for the history of the Jews. Although Laban and his fathers apparently were the custodians of the Plates, yet the book was a family heirloom, and Lehi may have had as much right to the record as anyone. One may quibble about the propriety of Lehi’s family pursuing the acquisition of the Plates, but there remain two vital considerations which must be acknowledged. First, the Lord God of Israel had commanded Lehi to seek possession of that specific volume which was in the custody of Laban. Second, without question, had the record not been carried to safety by Lehi and his entourage, the Brass Plates would have been destroyed by the Babylonians or lost in the conflagration that resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem.

3.12.5—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

3.13 From whence came the antipathy of Laban toward his cousins? Was this the case of a man who, having a little authority, sought to exercise unrighteous dominion? In some respects we see in Laban a foreshadowing of wicked King Noah, a drunken despot who perceived plots against his power and life on every hand. Laban did not fear to murder. He no doubt had already taken the lives of others.

3.13.8—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

3.13.37—*robber*—A thief thinks all men steal, and thus Laban reveals himself for what he is. He will have no hesitancy in confiscating all of Lehi’s wealth when it suits him (see 3.24–26).

3.14 Laman and Lemuel’s tolerance for opposition is lacking. If Nephi’s elder brothers could not perceive the value of the Brass Plates to their immediate family and then to their posterity, they would consider the risk of their lives for the record to be an act of foolishness. To Laman, the book appears to be

12 And he desired of Laban the records which were engraven upon the plates of brass, which contained the genealogy of my father.

1 Ne. 3:12
EM 1:181

{~~9~~—1830}

13 And behold, it came to pass that Laban was angry, and thrust him out from his presence; and he would not that he should have the records. Wherefore, he said unto him: Behold thou art a robber, and I will slay thee.

1 Ne. 3:13
EM 2:831

14 But Laman fled out of his presence, and told the things which Laban had done, unto us. And we began to be exceedingly sorrowful,

hardly more than a tome of ancestors' names; he does not even understand the value of the Plates as a primer for his children, that they might learn how to read and write properly. The scriptural value was apparently beyond him as well. That his father thought them worthwhile was clear, but he could foresee no personal impact upon him, and therefore the Plates were not worth the trouble involved in obtaining them. This had been his stance ever since the moment that Lehi had asked him to take the responsibility of retrieving the Plates. The threat against his life by the keeper of the record had fully justified his initial fears. He and Lemuel proposed an end to the matter, having given their all.

3.14.2—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah's sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

3.14.13—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

3.15 Nephi testifies to his brethren that their father and the Lord had not sent them to fail; they had sent them to succeed. Therefore it was incumbent upon them to exhaust every possible avenue to do what had been commanded of them. They simply had not discovered what they should do in order to be successful. But they had learned for themselves that casting lots may not have been the best approach.

3.15.8–11—*As the Lord liveth*—This is almost an oath. The four of them had come to Jerusalem at the behest of the Lord God of Israel. How could they return to their father without the Plates?

3.15.13–15—*as we live*—So long as they had breath, their assigned task was still upon them.

3.16 Father Lehi had been faithful in doing all that had been required of him thus far, including the abandonment of all of his material wealth. Should not his sons follow that stellar example and do everything that was within their power to do?

3.16.46—*commandments*—Perhaps, Nephi suggests, the Lord had required the abandonment of the family wealth just for this very purpose, that it might be used to persuade Laban to relinquish the plates. Laban certainly was not concerned for the literary value of the book; he was not the sort of sentimentalist who perceived the Plates as a family treasure; he was interested solely in its material value. That is why he accused Laman of being a robber.

3.17 Lehi had learned for himself the degree of wickedness into which the Jews had inundated themselves. He had been instructed in these matters by the prophets of his day and by the Lord's own voice. He had read an account of their sins and abominations as recorded in the book that he had seen in vision. He was obedient to the commandments of the Lord in every detail because he understood the consequences of disobedience. Shortly before his death, he would receive another revelation wherein he would witness for himself the doleful effects of persistence in sin.

3.17.5—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic

and my brethren were about to return unto my father in the wilderness.

15 But behold I said unto them that: As the Lord liveth, and as we live, we will not go down unto our father in the wilderness until we have accomplished the thing which the Lord hath commanded us.

16 Wherefore, let us be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord; therefore let us go down to the land of our father's inheritance, for behold he left gold and silver, and all manner of riches. And all this he hath done because of the commandments of the Lord.

17 For he knew that Jerusalem must be destroyed, because of the wickedness of the people.

1 Ne. 3:15
CR80-A 90
CR82-A 49
CR97-A 40

1 Ne. 3:16
EM 2:827
CR95-O 59

1 Ne. 3:17–18
CR88-O 102

heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

3.18 If Lehi had remained in the land of Jerusalem after his interview with God, he would have been rejecting the word of the Lord just as surely as the Jews when they rejected the words of the prophets. The consequences of his actions would have physically placed him in harm’s way when the advancing armies of the Babylonians descended upon the city and the nation. In addition, inasmuch as Lehi had enjoyed the confidence of the Lord God of Israel, refusal to obey would have endangered his eternal prospects as well. He would have “perished” in every way possible.

3.19 The elder brothers of Nephi were shortsighted, they could not perceive the liabilities they were inflicting upon their children without first obtaining a stabilizing influence by which one generation might communicate its wisdom to another. We are the aggregate of those who went before us. Our wisdom and intelligence are built upon that which has been transmitted to us through the centuries by our ancestors. As one wisely said long ago, “Those who fail to learn the lessons of history, are doomed to repeat them”. The Brass Plates not only would provide the content by which the posterity of Lehi could progress, they also provided the means by which they would be able to communicate their own wisdom many generations into the future. We need only look at the fate of the Mulekites to perceive the folly of not looking beyond one’s own time.

3.20 The record contained upon the Brass Plates was apparently comprehensive. The prophecies of the seers and revelators of the House of Israel had been preserved upon the Plates. The writings of Moses, Joseph, and scores of others back to the time of Noah would have been included as well. And what of the Antediluvians? Would not their Book of Remembrance, or goodly portions of that sacred record been inscribed as well? This was not only a treasure of the house of Joseph and his children; this was an unrivaled treasure pertaining to the righteous in every generation. We may yet look upon its pages in wonder.

3.20.22—*prophets*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

3.21 Nephi persuaded his older brothers that it was in their best interests to obtain the record which was then in the possession of Laban. In their case, there were immediate blessings to be obtained. Immediate obedience would help preserve and prosper their family in the wilderness. He convinced them that their survival was dependent upon their success in obtain the Brass Plates.

3.22 We do not know precisely where the young men went as they traveled to their ancestral home. Nephi says they went “down”, which in the parlance of the Book of Mormon almost invariably refers to elevation rather than direction. The elevation of the city of Jerusalem is in excess of 2500 feet above sea level. Almost any direction the brothers would have traveled in would have

{*¶*—1830}

18 For behold, they have rejected the words of the prophets. Wherefore, if my father should dwell in the land after he hath been commanded to flee out of the land, behold, he would also perish. Wherefore, it must needs be that he flee out of the land.

19 And behold, it is wisdom in God that we should obtain these records, that we may preserve unto our children the language of our fathers;

20 And also that we may preserve unto them the words which have been spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets, which have been delivered unto them by the Spirit and power of God, since the world began, even down unto this present time.

{*¶*—1830}

*21 And it came to pass that after this manner of language did I persuade my brethren, that they might be faithful in keeping the commandments of God.

22 And it came to pass that we went down to the land of our inheritance, and we did gather together our gold, and our silver, and our precious things.

1 Ne. 3:19
MD 103
CR86-A 74
1 Ne. 3:19–20
PM 88

1 Ne. 3:20
MD 103
CR86-A 74

* p. 11

caused them to go “down”. Some students of the Book of Mormon point to the land of “Lehi” as a possible place for the inheritance. “Lehi” was a place in the land of the Philistines about 32 miles southwest of Jerusalem where Samson slew one thousand of his enemies with the jawbone of an ass. “Lehi” had apparently been named as such prior to the slaughter, even though the word serendipitously meant “jawbone”. This, of course, would mean that the place name was given long before Lehi was born. Although the land of Lehi is “down” from the city of Jerusalem, it is unlikely that this was the place where Lehi’s land of inheritance was located.

3.23 One wonders whether or not the wealth of Lehi had been secretly ensconced in a cache somewhere before the family’s departure from the land of Jerusalem. If Lehi had foreseen the need for the gold and silver after they departed into the wilderness, he might have seen to the task. It is most likely, however, that Laman and Lemuel were the ones who made their inheritance safe. The loss of this wealth into the hands of Laban would have been particularly galling for them, if that were the case.

3.23.17—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

3.24 It is interesting that the brothers obtained another audience with Laban, but given the nature of the treasure which they brought with them we ought not to be too surprised. When Laman had initially approached Laban, the latter had accused him of being a robber. The presentation of the great wealth which the four young men put that lie to rest, if it had ever really been a serious issue at all. Since the writings on the Brass Plates would have meant little or nothing to a dissolute like Laban, the intrinsic value of the metal plates upon which the record was kept would have been the primary concern for him. Certainly the gold, silver, and precious things would have admirably repaid him for any time and effort required to retrieve the Brass Plates for his petitioners. We may wonder which of the brothers acted as spokesman on this occasion.

3.24.11—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

3.25 Laban was a man without a moral compass. He was, however, attracted by those things which would bring him fame and power. The treasure that the four brothers had placed before him in compensation for the record of the Jews was enormous and he immediately thought of how he might obtain those precious things without having to do anything in return. Where he had threatened death to Laman during the first interview (see 3.13), Laban had no compunction about having the brothers slain out of hand by his servants.

3.25.8—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

23 And after we had gathered these things together, we went up again unto the house of Laban.

{~~9~~—1830}

24 And it came to pass that we went in unto Laban, and desired him that he would give unto us the records which were engraven upon the plates of brass, for which we would give unto him our gold, and our silver, and all our precious things.

{~~9~~—1830}

25 And it came to pass that when Laban saw our property, and that it was exceedingly great, he did lust after it, insomuch that he thrust us out, and sent his servants to slay us, that he might obtain our property.

3.26 What sort of excuse did Laban muster in order to convince his servants that the four young men should be deprived of their lives? Perhaps none, if they were as corrupt as their master. Some men simply delight in the opportunity to take from another something as precious as life. The amoral and immoral Laban took possession of the whole of Lehi's wealth.

3.26.14—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

3.27 Either the boys were particularly fleet of foot, or the servants were not as motivated as Laban might have hoped.

3.27.16—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

3.27.27—*cavity*—There have been scholars as zealous as the mother of Constantine in their attempts to identify every place where Lehi and his family traveled in their adventures. Some of the speculations have been sublime; others have been mere grasping for a straw in a whirlwind. This identity of this particular cave has proven to be one of the latter.

3.28 Clearly, all of the frustration which Laman and Lemuel had been feeling ever since their father Lehi had announced that they were leaving the land of Jerusalem and departing into the wilderness was now coming to the forefront. Whatever the circumstances had been in the past, they were now impoverished beyond remedy. The discomfort of their travels coupled with the difficulty of the tasks associated with the acquisition of the Brass Plates had driven the two older brothers to distraction. The plan to obtain the Plates by bartering with their material wealth had been done at the suggestion of Nephi. Did they now esteem him to be a false prophet? They were first verbally abusive to Nephi and Sam and then, when the fires of their rage were not quelled, they resorted to brute force in order to vent their anger.

3.28.7—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah's sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

3.28.20—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

3.29 What the servants of Laban had been unable to achieve, Laman and Lemuel seemed ready and willing to accomplish. No doubt, if the angel of the Lord had not intervened, the two older brothers would have beaten their siblings to death. Were Sam and Nephi cowering in fear? Were they, as some have suggested, fervently praying to their God that they might be rescued from the immediate destruction which seemed to be upon them? Were they in this latter attitude, the older brothers may have been infuriated even more.

3.29.40–42—*Know you not*—Who would have told them up to this point? Nephi knew because the Lord had revealed it to him as he was praying for his brothers because of the hardness of their hearts (see 2.22). This

26 And it came to pass that we did flee before the servants of Laban, and we were obliged to leave behind our property, and it fell into the hands of Laban.

{¶—1830}

27 And it came to pass that we fled into the wilderness, and the servants of Laban did not overtake us, and we hid ourselves in the cavity of a rock.

28 And it came to pass that Laman was angry with me, and also with my father; and also was Lemuel, for he hearkened unto the words of Laman. Wherefore Laman and Lemuel did speak many hard words unto us, their younger brothers, and they did smite us even with a rod.

{¶—1830}

29 And it came to pass as they smote us with a rod, behold, an angel of the Lord came and stood before them, and he spake unto 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 ye shall go up to Jerusalem

1 Ne. 3:28
EM 2:801
1 Ne. 3:28–29
PM 33

1 Ne. 3:29
AF 195
1 Ne. 3:29–31
MD 35
DNTPC 2:96

revelation must have startled them. While Nephi did not record any reaction his brothers may have exhibited to that bit of news, yet one can only imagine that they were no happier about that development than were the sons of Jacob when young Joseph first put on his coat of many colors.

3.29.67—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

3.29.74—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

3.30 Surely the angel must have had some influence upon the hearts and minds of Laman and Lemuel. They are told that the third attempt to retrieve the Brass Plates would be successful. Imagine the effect of this angelic ministration upon Sam, he who had believed the words of his younger brother in spite of the antipathy exhibited toward Nephi. His singular faith in the testimony of Nephi had been justified and he would be blessed eternally as a result.

3.31 As Nephi will point out later, Laman and Lemuel were like unto the recalcitrant Israelites in the wilderness who had difficulty exercising enough faith to look upon the brass serpent which was designed to preserve those who had been bitten by the poisonous snakes that had come in among them. “How is that going to help?” must have been the words that they uttered just before passing out of mortality. Laman and Lemuel cannot intellectually perceive how they could do anything more than they had already done. All of the logical avenues had been exhausted. Interestingly enough, Nephi was no more informed as to what to do next than they were. As the Israelites were nurtured in their faith, episode by episode in the wilderness, so would the members of Lehi’s family be proven and strengthened until they became faithful every whit or succumbed to the fiery serpents of their own doubt and wickedness.

3.31.7—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

3.31.9—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

3.31.24—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

3.31.38—*fifty*—We do not know if the judicial order established by Moses among the Israelites had been perpetuated into the time of Lehi as a military structure. There have been those who have suggested a corre-

again, and the Lord will deliver Laban into your hands.

30 And after the angel had spoken unto us, he departed.

31 And after the angel had departed, Laman and Lemuel again began to murmur, saying: How is it possible that the Lord will deliver Laban into our hands? Behold, he is a mighty man, and he can command fifty, yea, even he can slay fifty; then why not us?

1 Ne. 3:31
CR01-O 105
1 Ne. 3:31
CR89-O 103
1 Ne. 3:31
CR99-O 6
1 Ne. 3:31
EM 4:1629

lation, but for the present we do not know. That Laban had a minimum of fifty men at his disposal is probably true, inasmuch as a number of them had been sent in pursuit of the four brothers.

{Chapter I, continued}
(Chapter 4)

{9—1830}

4.1 Laman and Lemuel should have known better. If they had but given any degree of thought to the name of their father, they would have recognized that the land of Lehi had been the place where Samson had slain a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass. Rivers had been turned out of the courses by prophetic utterance, mountains had been moved at the pleasure of Heaven, and entire nations had been blinded by the power of God and rendered completely helpless. Laban and his fifty were no more significant than the captains of fifty and their men who had come to take Elijah into custody for King Ahaziah.

4.1.19—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

4.1.46—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

4.1.55–57—*tens of thousands*—Either this is a hyperbole to impress upon the minds of Laman and Lemuel the tenuousness of their position or it is a statement of fact regarding the military responsibilities of Laban. In either case, Nephi’s point is that there could be nothing that would stand between them and the accomplishment of their task save their own recalcitrance.

4.2 Were the elder sons of Lehi not students of the sacred writings of their ancestors? Could their ignorance of the experiences of the House of Israel with the God of Heaven have hindered their ability to move forward with the task to which they had been assigned? Might this be one of the reasons why they were somewhat reluctant to pursue the issue with Laban? If they had known in their hearts that the Lord God of Israel had commanded their father to obtain the Brass Plates, they would have moved forward with alacrity just as Nephi and Sam had. According to the scriptures, the enemies of God were all without power in the end.

4.2.12—*Moses*—We have no idea how Amram and Jochebed referred to their son by name. This given by the princess, however, essentially is a reference to his deliverance from the Nile. In its elemental form, the name of the prophet means “is born”. The cognate in Hebrew means “drew him out”.

4.2.22–23—*Red Sea*—That is to say, that tongue of the Egyptian sea that separates Egypt from the Sinai peninsula. The southern border of Israel.

4.2.27–29—*hither and thither*—That is to say, “this way and that”, “here

1 AND it came to pass that I spake unto my brethren, saying: Let us go up again unto Jerusalem, and let us be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord; for behold he is mightier than all the earth, then why not mightier than Laban and his fifty, yea, or even than his tens of thousands?

1 Ne. 4
MD 103
DS 2:198
TSWK 527
EM 1:141, 142,
145, 187, 198,
213, 217
EM 2:701, 827,
855
EM 3:1005
CR99-O 6
1 Ne. 4:1
CR80-A 90
CR85-O 110
CR87-O 102
CR92-A 37
1 Ne. 4:1–3
CR01-A 12

2 Therefore let us go up; let us be strong like unto Moses; for he truly spake unto the waters of the Red Sea and they divided *hither and thither, and our fathers came through, out of captivity, on dry ground, and the armies of Pharaoh did follow and were drowned in the waters of the Red Sea.

1 Ne 4:2
DNTEC 3:214
* p. 12

and there”.

4.2.45—*Pharaoh*—From the very beginning of the establishment of the Egyptian people, the king of the Egypt was called Pharaoh, perhaps in honor of the first king whose given name was such. This practice continued until the Greek conquest of Egypt after which the kings were called Ptolemy, in honor of the Greek conqueror himself.

4.3 The appearance of the angel to the four brothers should have put some steel into the spines of the two older sons of Lehi. The hesitancy of Laman and Lemuel even in the face of such a manifestation should speak volumes to our souls regarding the importance of pursuing our growth in the spirit and increasing our understanding of the Lord’s labors with His children in ages past.

4.3.42—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

4.3.46—*Egyptians*—The inhabitants of the land naturally watered by the Nile River, the delta region of the same being luxuriant as one could hope for in terms of animal and vegetable life.

4.4 It is startling to contemplate the mindset of Laman and Lemuel. An emissary of the Lord God of Israel had just appeared to them, chastising them severely for their abusive treatment of the younger brothers, and yet they had the temerity to still be filled with anger toward Nephi. Why were they not receptive to the encouragement which Nephi provided? Why were they not men of faith? Were they filled with pride? Had their sense of seniority been threatened? Were they filled with wicked thoughts and desires which Nephi in his compassion has refused to reveal to his posterity? We have no way of knowing. What we can know is that the actions of these two men do not represent a rich spiritual life.

4.4.31—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

4.5 Was it serendipity that they arrive at the walls of Jerusalem in the evening, or was Nephi told by the spirit that they ought to wait until then? Laman, Lemuel, and Sam remained outside the walls while Nephi made his way toward what would be the final encounter between Laban and the family of Lehi. We are not told how Nephi was able to gain access to the city unless, as others have suggested, he literally “crept” through one of the small doors set in the large gates of Jerusalem after proving himself to the night guard that he was no threat.

4.5.24—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

4.5.36—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile

3 Now behold ye know that this is true; and ye also know that an angel hath spoken unto you; wherefore can ye doubt? Let us go up; the Lord is able to deliver us, even as our fathers, and to destroy Laban, even as the Egyptians.

{~~9~~—1830}

4 Now when I had spoken these words, they were yet wroth, and did still continue to murmur; nevertheless they did follow me up until we came without the walls of Jerusalem.

5 And it was by night; and I caused that they should hide themselves without the walls. And after they had hid themselves, I, Nephi, crept into the city and went forth towards the house of Laban.

1 Ne. 4:3–5
CR01-O 105

1 Ne. 4:4
CR89-O 103

1 Ne. 4:5
CR97-A 40
1 Ne. 4:5–18
EM 3:1284

as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

4.6 Once Nephi is given leave to procure the Plates by his brethren, all that he does conforms to the whisperings of the Spirit which is within him. If the truth be known, Nephi was undoubtedly instructed by the Lord as to his course of action long before they arrived at the city. Nephi is a man of faith; he knows and understands the odds which are against him. He is sufficiently humble to accept the circumstances, and to acknowledge that he will not be able to do that which the Lord has asked him to do without the guidance and direction of God.

4.7 Many of the tragic figures of the Book of Mormon were winebibbers, men whose lives were wasted in drink. The degree of Laban's cruelty may be indicated in his proclivity to drunkenness. It is intriguing that notwithstanding his great power and influence among the elders of the Jews, there were none who were prepared to see the man to safety, to escort him to his own home.

4.7.14—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

4.8 What brought Laban to this insensate stupor? Was it his windfall acquisition of the wealth of Lehi? Had he been celebrating his victory over the four brothers?

4.8.12—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

4.9 The Sword of Laban would figure into the history of the Nephite civilization continuously. It was the pattern by which were made almost all of the early weapons produced by Nephi and his friends to protect themselves from the Lamanites. The Sword itself was wielded on many occasions in defense of the covenant people. That the Sword still exists, there is no question. It remains in the final depository of the Nephite people in the Hill Cumorah. When Oliver Cowdery saw the Sword about the time that the Book of Mormon was published, he testified that there was an inscription written upon the blade.

When Joseph got the plates, the angel instructed him to carry them back to the hill Cumorah, which he did. Oliver says that when Joseph and Oliver went there, the hill opened, and they walked into a cave, in which there was a large and spacious room. He says he did not think, at the time, whether they had the light of the sun or artificial light; but that it was just as light as day. They laid the plates on a table; it was a large table that stood in the room. Under this table there was a pile of plates as much as two feet high, and there were altogether in this room more plates than probably many wagon loads; they were piled up in the corners and along the walls. The first time they went there the sword of

6 And I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do.

7 Nevertheless I went forth, and as I came near unto the house of Laban I beheld a man, and he had fallen to the earth before me, for he was drunken with wine.

8 And when I came to him I found that it was Laban.

9 And I beheld his sword, and I drew it forth from the sheath thereof; and the hilt thereof was of pure gold, and the workmanship thereof was exceedingly fine, and I saw that the blade thereof was of the most precious steel.

1 Ne. 4:6
AF 42. 159
EM 2:683
CR80-A 17
CR93-A 55, 86
CR94-O 80
CR96-A 24, 47
CR02-A 37
1 Ne. 4:6–18
EM 1:162
1 Ne. 4:6–7
CR89-O 40

1 Ne. 4:9
EM 3:1427,
1428

Laban hung upon the wall; but when they went again it had been taken down and laid upon the table across the gold plates; it was unsheathed, and on it was written these words: "This sword will never be sheathed again until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our God and his Christ." (Brigham Young, *JD*, Vol. 19)

4.9.42—*steel*—Detractors of the Book of Mormon and of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are fond of pointing to this word and blurting out, "See, the Book cannot be true because there was no such thing as 'steel' six hundred years before Christ. In this they exhibit profound ignorance. First of all, the word "steel" has been in the vocabularies of Indo-European languages as far back as recorded documents exist. In the 1828 Webster's dictionary, "steel" is defined as an iron alloy, iron combined with a small portion of carbon in order to harden the metal. Webster refers to this as "carburet of iron". The Bessemer method of making modern steel was not invented until the late 1850s and has nothing to do with the meaning of the word used in the translation of the Book of Mormon in 1829.

{*¶*—1830}

4.10 The struggle that Nephi had at this moment in his life would set him apart from all those around him. In some respects he found himself in much the same situation morally as Abraham when the Patriarch was commanded by God to offer up his only son Isaac upon an altar at Mount Moriah. Abraham knew for himself the great tribulations associated with human sacrifice in general and the offering of one's own children in particular. His father Terah had attempted his life by way of the priest of Elkenah. Nephi had been taught that the taking of another's life was contrary to the will of God; the Law of Moses had been quite specific about that commandment. His immediate hesitancy is a reflection of the wonderful manner in which Nephi had been taught by his parents.

10 And it came to pass that I was constrained by the Spirit that I should kill Laban; but I said in my heart: Never at any time have I shed the blood of man. And I shrunk and would that I might not slay him.

1 Ne. 4:10
EM 3:1427
1 Ne. 4:10–18
EM 2:971

4.10.17—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

4.11 The argument of the Spirit is one that does not change. The Lord God of Israel wanted Laban ushered into a place where he could do no more damage to himself or to anyone else. Nephi is to be an executioner rather than a murderer. There are those, however, in the simplicity of their understanding of the mind and will of God who do not hesitate to condemn both Nephi and God for what is about to happen. Nephi first hesitates to kill Laban because he has never done anything like that before. We ought to remember that Nephi is probably no older than sixteen years of age. Upon reflecting upon his experiences with Laban, Nephi remembers that without question Laban is an apostate, a thief, and a murderer.

11 And the Spirit said unto me again: Behold the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands. Yea, and I also knew that he had sought to take away mine own life; yea, and he would not hearken unto the commandments of the Lord; and he also had taken away our property.

1 Ne. 4:11
EM 3:1427

{*¶*—1830}

4.12 Notwithstanding the justifications that Nephi can provide for himself as to why Laban should be killed, the Spirit of the Lord refocuses Nephi's mind and heart upon the task at hand. It is not because that Laban is an apostate, thief, or murderer that his life is forfeit; it is because the drunken man has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. The Lord has decreed his death. Any other approach to the taking of Laban's life would be injurious to

12 And it came to pass that the Spirit said unto me again: Slay him, for the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands;

1 Ne. 4:12–13
EM 3:1195
CR97-A 40

Nephi's soul.

4.13 The Lord slays; Nephi does not slay. The Lord has righteous purposes which the mind of a young man could not fathom at this early time in his life. Nephi has "good" reasons for taking Laban's life, but they are not the Lord's reasons. The Spirit reminds Nephi that the future of his father's posterity hangs in the balance. Laban stands in the way of the Lord's righteous purposes with regard to His covenant people, with those who are willing to obey Him. Without the Brass Plates, the entire purpose for the which Lehi and his family have been chosen will be frustrated.

4.14 Nephi is led along in his thinking by the Spirit of God so that his motivation for taking Laban's life is more in harmony with that of the Lord. Laban should die, not because he has been rude and abusive to Nephi and his brethren, but because he was not willing to do the Lord's will. Were the truth to be known, we most certainly would discover that Laban's recalcitrance to deliver up the Brass Plates had to do as much with his antipathy towards God as it did in his antipathy toward Lehi and his family. Lehi is desirous to keep the commandments of God as is Nephi. And, like every righteous man who has ever lived upon the earth, they desire that their endless posterity do the same. All of the blessings extended to Lehi and Nephi are based on obedience to the law of God. Obedience could not be accomplished in ignorance or forgetfulness. Hence, the inestimable value of the Brass Plates which Laban in his wickedness had withheld from the covenant people.

4.15 Principles of general goodness might be adequately communicated from generation by good people. The commandments of the Lord in the days of Lehi and his family included all of the rituals and timely sacrifices associated with the Law of Moses. No one could possibly have transmitted the minutia associated with that set of carnal commandments through one generation, much less the dozens that might be required in the process of time.

4.15.21—*Moses*—We have no idea how Amram and Jochebed referred to their son by name. This given by the princess, however, essentially is a reference to his deliverance from the Nile. In its elemental form, the name of the prophet means "is born". The cognate in Hebrew means "drew him out".

4.16 The Plates of Brass contained the genealogical records of Lehi family, as interesting and informative as that might be. It also contained the words of the prophets from the beginning, a reflection of the Lord God's dealings with His servants. But most importantly, the Plates contained the entire Law of Moses which would preserve the posterity of Lehi in righteousness for more than six hundred years.

4.16.7—*law*—That is to say, the Law of Moses which governed the rituals of the House of Israel for nearly 1,500 years.

4.17 Nephi recognizes that Laban is not prostrate before him so that he might take revenge, or that he might make a preemptive strike against that which Laban might do in the future. Laban is there because of the Brass Plates, prostrate so that he might be dealt with in an appropriate fashion, so that record of the Jews might come to be in the possession of those whom God the Father willed should have it.

4.17.10—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch

13 Behold the Lord slayeth the wicked to bring forth his righteous purposes. It is better that one man should perish than that a nation should dwindle and perish in unbelief.

{*¶—1830*}

14 And now, when I, Nephi, had heard these words, I remembered the words of the Lord which he spake unto me in the wilderness, saying that: Inasmuch as thy seed shall keep my commandments, they shall prosper in the land of promise.

15 Yea, and I also thought that they could not keep the commandments of the Lord according to the law of Moses, save they should have the law.

16 And I also knew that the law was engraven upon the plates of brass.

17 And again, I knew that *the Lord had delivered Laban into my hands for this cause—that I might obtain the records according to his commandments.

1 Ne. 4:13
DNTC 1:535
CR82-O 18
CR91-A 15
CR93-A 14
CR94-A 42

1 Ne. 4:14
EM 1:378
CR85-A 16
CR86-A 34
CR02-O 42

1 Ne. 4:15–16
MD 103, 435
DNTC 2:141
1 Ne. 4:18
EM 3:1427

* p. 13

as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

4.18 Thus the deed was done with the rationale of the Lord God of Israel in the forefront. Had Nephi killed Laban with any other motive in his heart, he would have eventually withered from guilt and despair. He might have become like unto his own murderous brothers. He might have contemplated taking their lives, especially when they became as vicious and persecuting as Laban had been. The Lord through His Spirit guided Nephi in all that he did so that when difficult acts were required of the young man, he was not destroyed by mistaken notions or misconduct of any kind. We will see Nephi in grief later when he fails to live up to Lehi's avowed estimation of him (see 2 *NE-C 1.26* and 2 *NE-C 4.27-29*).

4.18.12—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

4.19 All the following actions were also dictated by the Spirit of the Lord even though the text does not specifically say so. Nephi must needs go to the treasury of Laban in order to acquire the Brass Plates. Was the Lord's plan for obtaining the Plates revealed to Nephi step by step as he went along, or was the general outline of the plan revealed all at once? We do not know; either way would be consistent with how the Lord has dealt with His servants in the past. We need not overly concern ourselves about the grim task associated with Nephi dressing himself with Laban's clothing and armor; Nephi has chosen not to disclose any aversion he might have felt.

4.19.18—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

4.19.29—*whit*—The English word "whit" derives from ancient English roots which at one time meant "man", "whit" being a shortened form of the word "wight", itself meaning "creature, being, thing". It has come to mean "the smallest particle" like unto a "jot" or a "tittle" in writing. Nephi dresses himself in such a fashion that he looked precisely like "Laban", using all of the clothing and equipment at hand in order to do so.

4.20 Was Nephi's impersonation of Laban a studied one or was this a gift of the Spirit of God? Regardless of the source, Nephi is effective in convincing Zoram to return to the treasury in order to obtain the records. One wonders if Zoram had been privy to the previous machinations of Laban when the latter sent servants to dispatch the four brothers. One wonders at the sentiments that Zoram may have had as he became privy to the vast acquisition that Laban had undoubtedly delivered to the treasury during the day, especially once the circumstances of the robbery became clear.

4.20.14—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of

18 Therefore I did obey the voice of the Spirit, and took Laban by the hair of the head, and I smote off his head with his own sword.

{~~9~~—1830}

19 And after I had smitten off his head with his own sword, I took the garments of Laban and put them upon mine own body; yea, even every whit; and I did gird on his armor about my loins.

20 And after I had done this, I went forth unto the treasury of Laban. And as I went forth towards the treasury of Laban, behold, I saw the servant of Laban who had the keys of the treasury. And I commanded him in the voice of Laban, that he should go with me into the treasury.

1 Ne. 4:20–26
AF 321
1 Ne. 4:20–38
EM 4:1629

Joseph Laban was descended.

4.21 Either Zoram did not scrutinize closely or the Spirit aided Nephi considerably. Would the garments and the sword have been sufficient under any circumstances to identify Laban? It seems likely that the Spirit whispered peace to Zoram's soul as well. When Nephi's true identity is revealed it does not take much persuasion to gain Zoram's oath of fealty.

4.21.9—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

4.22 The elders of the Jews in the days of Jesus and the Apostles would have been the members of the Sanhedrin. But this is an institution which probably did not come into existence until long after the Babylonia Captivity, perhaps during the Maccabean Kingdom, or even after that. During the time of Moses, seventy elders were chosen to represent the House of Israel in the presence of the Lord God. We do not know whether this council continued after the conquest of the Canaan, even though the Sanhedrin was clearly patterned after it. Some scholars have suggested that Laban was considered one of the "*shoterim*", a class of civil and military men whose primary job seems to be more scribal than anything else. The word is almost always translated as "officers", and it is clear that they were "superintendents" and "magistrates" as well. It may have been with a group of these "elders" or "officers" with whom Laban had been carousing.

4.22.11—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

4.22.17—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

4.23 Whereas Nephi had attempted to look and sound like Laban in his dress and inflection (see 4.20), he now addresses himself to Zoram with topics and references which labeled the content of his speech as being like that of Laban as well.

4.23.11—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

4.24 It is intriguing that Zoram's curiosity is not particularly aroused by Nephi's request to take the Brass Plates outside the walls of the city. It may have been that Laban was such a tyrant that none of his servants questioned any of his demands for fear of reprisals or other punishment.

4.25 It is likely that Nephi commanded Zoram to carry the Plates rather than carry them himself. Is this not what Laban would have done? Everything we

21 And he supposed me to be his master, Laban, for he beheld the garments and also the sword girded about my loins.

22 And he spake unto me concerning the elders of the Jews, he knowing that his master, Laban, had been out by night among them.

23 And I spake unto him as if it had been Laban.

24 And I also spake unto him that I should carry the engravings, which were upon the plates of brass, to my elder brethren, who were without the walls.

25 And I also bade him that he should follow me.

1 Ne. 4:24–27
DNTC 3:145

know about this wicked man speaks of self-indulgence and the inconveniencing of others. Nephi's motivation for having Zoram accompany him, of course, was to delay discovery of the charade for as long as it was possible.

4.26 Did the "brethren of the church" differ from the "elders of the Jews"? We have no way of knowing for certain. If we are correct about the civil and military nature of the "officers" or "*shoterim*" (see 4.22), then the "brethren of the church" would be, by contrast, more along ecclesiastical lines. Nephi, of course, had been referring to his literal "elder brethren" who were waiting outside of the walls of Jerusalem.

4.26.19—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

4.27 For whatever reason, Zoram chats with Nephi about the "elders of the Jews" as they make their way to the gates of the city. What drew his interest? If Zoram were anxious to make some headway in the society of the day, then it might have been to his advantage to have well-positioned friends by whom he might make advancement. On the other hand, Zoram might have been concerned about the political developments in Judea which would certainly terminate in the death and misery of many souls. He undoubtedly had already been alerted to the fact that the prophets of God were projecting the captivity of the Jews and the destruction of the Temple and the city. "What is the position of the elders?" he might have asked. "What are they going to do in light of the prophecies?" Zoram eventually would look upon Nephi with great friendship and gratitude. Was he already convinced that the prophets were speaking the mind and will of God?

4.27.13—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

4.28 Laman is clearly edgy. In the first two forays to obtain the Plates, Laman had been nominally in charge, his hand was somewhat on the helm. In this instance he had been left by Nephi outside the walls of Jerusalem. He is confident of only one thing: Nephi will not be successful. The appearance of a man dressed like Laban confirmed any suspicions he might have had. Nephi must have been captured, interrogated, and confessed all, even the location where his older brothers could be apprehended. Lemuel was of a mind with his elder brother and bolted with him. Sam's heart failed him as well when the other two began to flee.

4.28.8—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah's sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

4.28.17—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

4.28.19—*Sam*—The third son of Lehi and Sariah who tended to follow the direction of his younger brother Nephi. He and his posterity were considered generally to be Nephites.

26 And he, supposing that I spake of the brethren of the church, and that I was truly that Laban whom I had slain, wherefore he did follow me.

27 And he spake unto me many times concerning the elders of the Jews, as I went forth unto my brethren, who were without the walls.

{¶—1830}

28 And it came to pass that when Laman saw me he was exceedingly frightened, and also Lemuel and Sam. And they fled from before my presence; for they supposed it was Laban, and that he had slain me and had sought to take away their lives also.

{¶—1830}

1 Ne. 4:26
MD 134
DNTC 2:73
MLM 124

4.29 Whether there was some prearranged signal or whether Nephi called to them in terms that would immediately identify him as their brother, we do not know. But Zoram was apparently still convinced that Nephi was Laban, until Laman, Lemuel, and Sam came into view. Nephi had told Zoram from the beginning that they were taking the Brass Plates to his brethren outside the gates of the city; finding three people waiting for the pair should not have particularly surprised Laban's servant.

4.30 There was something about the three young men that frightened Zoram. He had assumed that what Nephi meant by "elder brethren" had been "brethren of the church". Needless to say, Laman, Lemuel, and Sam would not have been dressed as might have been expected of ecclesiastical leaders. Additionally, the four brothers together may have triggered the suspicion in Zoram's mind that all was not as it had seemed to be. He may have even settled upon who these four might be, especially if anything at all had been noised about in Laban's household concerning the debacle that had taken place the day before.

4.30.11—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

4.30.33—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, "flowing peace" or "established in peace". The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, "established in peace" is by definition, the City of the great King.

4.31 We ought not to consider that Zoram was of a sickly disposition or physically challenged. The natural gifts of Nephi coupled with the power of God that was upon him could have detained any man, regardless of his own stature and personal strength.

4.31.4—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

4.31.10—*stature*—Although we do not know with certainty how old Nephi was at this time, he was considerably larger than most of his age. Arnold Freiberg, in his artistic conceptions of Lehi's family, has all of the men muscular and somewhat burly. That may have been. The primary meaning of the word "stature" in English, however, has to do with the natural height a person standing in an upright position.

4.31.16—*strength*—We live in an era of cynicism and disbelief. As a result, the notion that a man or woman could attain physical strength beyond their natural gifts is considered fanciful at best. Throughout the Book of Mormon, however, and indeed in other volumes of scriptures, we find men who are blessed by the Lord beyond their natural endowments. We speak of divine inspiration in intellectual endeavors. Why should we doubt the power of the Holy Ghost to enhance our physical capacities?

4.31.28—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile

29 And it came to pass that I called after them, and they did hear me; wherefore they did cease to flee from my presence.

30 And it came to pass that when the servant of Laban beheld my brethren he began to tremble, and was about to flee from before me and return to the city of Jerusalem.

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31 And now I, Nephi, being a man large in stature, and also having received much strength of the Lord, therefore I did seize upon the servant of Laban, and held him, that he should not flee.

1 Ne. 4:30
CR97-A 40
1 Ne. 4:30–37
AF 321

1 Ne. 4:31–37
EM 1:193

as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

4.32 Zoram is told that he need not fear for his life. They were not intent on putting him to death. Zoram must have already figured out that Laban must have fallen on hard times indeed if another man was wearing his clothes and armor.

4.32.21–22—*Lord liveth*—Nephi testifies that all that they are about is in concert with the will of God, and he swears to Zoram that that is the case. It is a binding oath of assurance in the name of God. Nephi was speaking in terms that Zoram would understand.

4.32.25–26—*I live*—Nephi also testifies that his own life would be forfeit if anything adverse were to happen to Zoram. This is a personal assurance that Zoram has the protection of Nephi, even if it meant the sacrifice of his own life. His immediate experience with Nephi’s physical strength must have inspired a great deal of confidence in the heart and mind of Zoram that Nephi was able to do what he promised to do.

4.33 We know little about Zoram’s background. Was he an indentured servant? Was he a slave? Certain both were common in that age of world history. Scholars have speculated that Zoram, because of his name, may have been a Phoenician, formerly of the city of Tyre or perhaps an Israelite whose original inheritance pertained to one of the tribes which bordered Phoenicia. Nephi assures Zoram that his life will not be taken and he will have an equal opportunity at freedom with his father’s family.

4.34 The conclusion of Nephi’s appeal seems to be the most compelling. That which they were doing had been commanded of the Lord God of Israel. Zoram appears to be susceptible to this line of reasoning. If Zoram had been an indentured servant or slave, one who believed the words of Jeremiah and others, he could see that there was no way for him to be delivered from the destruction which was about to descend upon the city and the nation in which he was a resident. How much Nephi was required to tell Zoram about his father’s visions and prophecies in order to persuade him to accompany them into the wilderness we may only surmise. The power of the Holy Ghost was sufficiently powerful, however, that with any sensitivity at all Zoram would have been completely receptive to Nephi’s appeal. Nephi’s promise was completely fulfilled. Zoram had a place as a free man and he would enjoy a rich family life with them as well.

4.35 Nephi had sworn personal fealty unto Zoram in the name of the Lord God of Israel. No stronger bond or oath could have been made. Zoram, in his turn, made a similar covenant with the brothers. He would go into the wilderness with them, he would not attempt a return to Jerusalem, and his permanent home from that day forth would be with the family of Lehi. He had become, for all practical purposes, a full member of Lehi’s family.

4.35.7—*Zoram*—The servant of Laban who had charge of the treasury wherein lay the Plates of Brass. He became a fast friend to Nephi and devoted disciple of Jesus Christ.

4.36 Nephi is speaking practically here, speaking the mind of all four brothers with regard to their feelings about Laban’s servant at the time they stood

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32 And it came to pass that I spake with him, that if he would hearken unto my words, as the Lord liveth, and as I live, even so that if he would hearken unto our words, we would spare *his life.

1 Ne. 4:32
CR82-A 71
1 Ne. 4:32–33
MD 538
DNTC 3:163
* p. 14

33 And I spake unto him, even with an oath, that he need not fear; that he should be a free man like unto us if he would go down in the wilderness with us.

1 Ne. 4:32–34
EM 3:1020
1 Ne. 4:33–37
EM 1:188
1 Ne. 4:34
CR96-A 102

34 And I also spake unto him, saying: Surely the Lord hath commanded us to do this thing; and shall we not be diligent in keeping the commandments of the Lord? Therefore, if thou wilt go down into the wilderness to my father thou shalt have place with us.

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35 And it came to pass that Zoram did take courage at the words which I spake. Now Zoram was the name of the servant; and he promised that he would go down into the wilderness unto our father. Yea, and he also made an oath unto us that he would tarry with us from that time forth.

1 Ne. 4:35,37
CR82-A 71

36 Now we were desirous that he should tarry with us for this cause,

outside the wall of the city. For Zoram to return to Jerusalem would have been a disaster for the family. Were Zoram to protect himself by accusing the sons of Lehi of taking the life of one of the “officers” of the Jews and of then walking away with the Brass Plates, it is quite likely that the whole family would have been hunted down and destroyed in short order. There is neither cynicism nor duplicity describe here.

4.37 The effectiveness of personal oaths among the Nephites and Lamanites would continue until the time of the secret combinations when no oath seemed to be believed or accepted as true. There would come a time when men would be compelled to foreswear themselves and at that point, the fabric of binding covenants among the children of Lehi began to unravel quickly.

4.37.8—*Zoram*—The servant of Laban who had charge of the treasury wherein lay the Plates of Brass. He became a fast friend to Nephi and devoted disciple of Jesus Christ.

4.38 The departure of the sons of Lehi from the environs of the city as soon as possible was imperative. It was yet night, but soon dawn would bring to light the rather grisly death of Laban and the disappearance of Zoram and the Brass Plates. Therefore, the five men departed into the wilderness, perhaps stopping only long enough to gather up their belongings, the tents and other accoutrements.

4.38.17—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

5.1 Like Abraham of old, Lehi had been given a commandment that would place all that he had ever been promised by the God of Heaven in jeopardy. All of the inheritance blessings associated with the Patriarchal Order were centered in Abraham and Sarah’s only son Isaac. When the Lord God gave Abraham instructions to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice, Abraham was obedient, explicitly, until the angel of the Lord came to Mount Moriah and stayed Abraham’s hand. Sending his four sons back to Jerusalem, a city antithetical to the righteous, into the realm of Laban, undoubtedly a fearsome character even in the estimation of Lehi, had been an act of transcendent faith. Can anyone doubt that Abraham rejoiced at having his only son restored to him at the last moment? Can anyone doubt that not withstanding his faith, Lehi received his four children into his own tent with great élan?

5.1.28—*Sariah*—The wife of Lehi and the mother of the family that eventually inherited the land of promise in what is now known as the western hemisphere.

5.2 What must have been the thoughts that passed through the mind of Sarah, Isaac’s mother, as her husband and her son made their way to the mountain of sacrifice? Did she know what had been commanded of them? How could she not know? Likewise Sariah trembled at the journey through the wilderness from their encampment to the city. She, herself, had passed through that deso-

that the Jews might not know concerning our flight into the wilderness, lest they should pursue us and destroy us.

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37 And it came to pass that when Zoram had made an oath unto us, our fears did cease concerning him.

38 And it came to pass that we took the plates of brass and the servant of Laban, and departed into the wilderness, and journeyed unto the tent of our father.

{Chapter I, continued}
(Chapter 5)

{¶—1830}

1 AND it came to pass that after we had come down into the wilderness unto our father, behold, he was filled with joy, and also my mother, Sariah, was exceedingly glad, for she truly had mourned because of us.

2 For she had supposed that we had perished in the wilderness; and she also had complained against my father, telling him that he was a visionary man; saying: Behold thou

1 Ne. 4:37
EM 3:1020
CR97-A 40

1 Ne. 4:38
EM 1:185, 378

1 Ne. 5
DS 2:198
EM 1:106, 141,
142, 145, 187,
198, 213, 217
EM 2:855
1 Ne. 5:1–14
EM 1:185
1 Ne. 5:1–7
EM 4:1578

1 Ne. 5:2
EM 2:827
CR82-O 123
1 Ne. 5:2–8
EM 4:1578

lation and knew it for what it was. If she knew of the details of the task that had been placed before her boys, that did not trouble her as much as their sojourn in the wilderness. Sariah's complaints against Lehi are strikingly familiar (see 2.11).

5.3 One cannot help but wonder whether Laman and Lemuel were echoing their mother's complaint or the reverse. It is interesting, however, to note the manner in which Lehi deals with his recalcitrant and critical sons as compared to his approach with Sariah.

5.4 Sometimes true things are said of us in a derogatory manner. We may justifiably take exception to the manner in which something is said, but we often bristle or become embarrassed at the truth which is meant to offend us. Lehi exemplifies his ability to discern between the two things in his comforting words to his wife. He knew that it had been difficult for Sariah to leave the comforts of home to follow her husband into the wilderness based solely on his testimony of the mercy and kindness of God. She had received no such vision as he had. Her actions had been an expression of her faith in Lehi as a good man. His reply is simple: "We may or may not perish in the wilderness; that will be determined by the Father of heaven and earth. But we absolutely would have perished in Jerusalem had we remained there. Of that there can be no doubt."

5.4.48—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, "flowing peace" or "established in peace". The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, "established in peace" is by definition, the City of the great King.

5.5 Any blessings or benefits that Lehi and his family may have forsaken in the land of their inheritance were to be compensated for. His was an act of faith based on experience and revelation. Sariah was constrained to accept her husband's word on the matter. The ability of a woman to follow her spouse through arduous times is largely founded in her perception of him as a man, her belief that he is attempting to do what is right for all that are concerned. Lehi believed that God would spare the lives of his sons because he could not imagine otherwise. He believed as well that they would bear with them the Plates of Brass. Lehi had rejoiced in Nephi's testimony that he could accomplish anything that the Lord gave him to do, because that witness was in concert with his own faith (see 3.7–8).

5.5.33—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

5.6 The active confidence that Lehi had in the promises of the Lord God of Israel, his fervent testimony borne by the power of the Holy Ghost, was sufficient to sustain Sariah until the return of their sons from their mission to Jerusalem.

5.6.10—*Lehi*—The first prophet of the Lamanites and the Nephites who left the land of Jerusalem about the year 600 BC. Many of his experi-

hast led us forth from the land of our inheritance, and my sons are no more, and we perish in the wilderness.

3 And after this manner of language had my mother complained against my father.

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4 And it had come to pass that my father spake unto her, saying: I know that I am a visionary man; for if I had not seen the things of God in a vision I should not have known the goodness of God, but had tarried at Jerusalem, and had perished with my brethren.

5 But behold, I have obtained a land of promise, in the which things I do rejoice; yea, and I know that the Lord will deliver my sons out of the hands of Laban, and bring them down again unto us in the wilderness.

1 Ne. 5:5–6, 10–13
EM 3:1418

6 And after this manner of language did my father, Lehi, comfort my mother, Sariah, concerning us, while we journeyed in the wilderness up to the land of Jerusalem, to obtain the record of the Jews.

ences are recorded in the writings of his son, Nephi, engraved upon the Small Plates of Nephi.

5.6.14—*Sariah*—The wife of Lehi and the mother of the family that eventually inherited the land of promise in what is now known as the western hemisphere.

5.6.28—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

5.6.35—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

5.7 While Lehi may have had absolute confidence in the promises of God, and Sariah may have had complete trust in the words of her husband, yet it nonetheless was a different experience altogether to have the four boys return to their camp in the wilderness, basically unscathed and in possession of the record which they had been sent to recover. Their trust in the Lord and in each other had been completely justified and had been immeasurably amplified. Certainly Nephi and Sam were joyful at their safe return. One must imagine that Laman and Lemuel were somewhat nonplussed at the reunion, wondering what all the fuss was about. Could they have perceived the fervent expressions of joy by their parents as a kind of doubt on Lehi and Sariah’s part that they might perish in their attempt to obtain the Plates? Given the future conduct of the two elder brothers, we might rightly conclude that neither Laman nor Lemuel came away from the experience with an increase in their personal faith.

5.8 Sariah’s testimony regarding Lehi and the Lord’s commandments is tender and heartfelt. It is stunning, in some aspects, that her elder sons do not seemed to be moved much by her expressions of joy. Sariah has without question joined Lehi, Nephi, and Sam in her commitment to their life of exile and the arduous journey to the promised land.

5.8.46—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

5.9 There were three kinds of sacrifices articulated by the Law of Moses for the House of Israel. The first was for the sacrifice for sin, reconciliation between men who had offended one another and also in the case where men had offended God by their conduct. The second was called a “peace” offering, an offering of thanksgiving when all seemed to be going well for a man and his family. The burnt offering was presented to God as an act of consecration, a recommitment to do all that the Lord required of them. One might make a

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7 And when we had returned to the tent of my father, behold *their joy was full, and my mother was comforted.

* p. 15

8 And she spake, saying: Now I know of a surety that the Lord hath commanded my husband to flee into the wilderness; yea, and I also know of a surety that the Lord hath protected my sons, and delivered them out of the hands of Laban, and given them power whereby they could accomplish the thing which the Lord hath commanded them. And after this manner of language did she speak.

1 Ne. 5:8
CR82-O 123
CR89-O 40

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9 And it came to pass that they did rejoice exceedingly, and did offer sacrifice and burnt offerings unto the Lord; and they gave thanks unto the God of Israel.

1 Ne. 5:9
AF 453
PM 428
EM 1:188
EM 3:1248
EM 4:1578
1 Ne. 5:9–10

case for any and all of these sacrifices for the benefit of the members of Lehi's family.

5.9.14—*sacrifice*—We must conclude that the offering of sacrifice by Lehi and his family, together with all other offerings demanded by the Law of Moses, were accomplished by a priesthood other than that possessed by the priests in Jerusalem. All those sacrifices at the Temple were directed by the presiding authorities of the Aaronic and Levitical Priesthoods. Lehi and his family pertained to the tribe of Manasseh and not to the tribe of Levi. Therefore, they must have conducted their worship of the Lord God under the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood, an authority after the Order of the Son of God which can administer in all of the ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and of the Law of Moses.

5.9.16–17—*burnt offerings*—An act of consecration and rededication to all of the principles and ordinances pertaining to the fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The animal in these sorts of offering were completely consumed upon the altar.

5.9.29—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.10 Undoubtedly Lehi knew of some of the contents of the Brass Plates because he uses that knowledge to help convince his sons that it was important for them to return to Jerusalem and approach Laban for the acquisition of them (see 3.3). Nephi also knew that the Plates contain the commandments of God and that they were vital to the future spiritual prosperity of his descendants (see 4.14–15). Whether he knew that as a result of his father's teachings or whether he was aware of that fact because of direct revelation, we do not know.

5.10.11—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.10.14—*Lehi*—The first prophet of the Lamanites and the Nephites who left the land of Jerusalem about the year 600 BC. Many of his experiences are recorded in the writings of his son, Nephi, engraved upon the Small Plates of Nephi.

5.11 There are long and tortuous arguments by the learned men of the world regarding the composition of the Pentateuch, the five books of the Lawgiver Moses. Most of them fall flat when one considers that Lehi is reviewing these writings over a hundred years before they were supposed by these scholars to have been compiled. All opinions to the contrary aside, there are numerous evidences that demonstrate that the first five books of the Bible were penned in their totality by the prophet Moses himself. That those original writings have been manipulated somewhat and grievously mistranslated in several instances is freely admitted. Errors in transmission and the residual machinations of wicked men ought not to distract us from the truth of the matter. It would be an interesting exercise to compare the writings of Moses as contained on the Brass Plates with the texts of the King James version and the inspired version which has come to light in our own day. We might easily believe that the saints of God would be most gratified by the comparison

5.11.12—*Moses*—We have no idea how Amram and Jochebed referred to

10 And after they had given thanks unto the God of Israel, my father, Lehi, took the records which were engraven upon the plates of brass, and he did search them from the beginning.

11 And he beheld that they did contain the five books of Moses, which gave an account of the creation of the world, and also of Adam and Eve, who were our first parents;

MA 110

1 Ne. 5:10–13
AF 251, 254
1 Ne. 5:10–14
PM 89
1 Ne. 5:10–15
EM 3:1027
1 Ne. 5:10–16
EM 1:158

1 Ne. 5:11
MD 17, 242,
268, 283, 563,
616
DNTC 1:95
DS 1:93
JC 18
EM 2:959
CR86-A 74
CR93-O 49
1 Ne. 5:11–13
CR99-O 89
1 Ne. 5:11–14
MD 103
EM 3:1195

their son by name. This given by the princess, however, essentially is a reference to his deliverance from the Nile. In its elemental form, the name of the prophet means “is born”. The cognate in Hebrew means “drew him out”.

- 5.11.19—*creation*—Inasmuch as the Brass Plates contain the earliest known manuscript of the books of Moses, the details of the creation of the earth and of Adam and Eve are undoubtedly far more explicit and detailed than that with which the world is currently familiar.
- 5.11.26—*Adam*—The first man upon the earth, and the first flesh also; that is to say, the first mortal together with his wife Eve. He is the Ancient of Days, the Archangel Michael, and the Father of All Living.
- 5.11.28—*Eve*—The wife of Adam, the first woman, and the Mother of All Living.

5.12 When did the record of the Jews begin? Would this have including the writings of their great Patriarch, Judah the son of Jacob? Were there any of the posterity of Judah who compiled records of any kind from the time of Moses until the days of King David who was himself of that illustrious tribe? We might point to the story of Ruth which had been preserved, in which is recorded the experiences of David’s ancestors in the lands of Moab and Bethlehem. Some of David’s writings are preserved in the Psalms; the Proverbs are attributed to his most wise son Solomon. Could the writings of the prophets Nathan and Gad be found in the record of the Jews which was engraved upon the Plates of Brass? Did the record of the Jews begin after the separation of Solomon’s realm into the Kingdom of Judah and the Kingdom of Israel? These are difficult questions to be sure, but we must consider the material with which Lehi and his family would have most familiar as they ponder the Plates in the wilderness.

- 5.12.7—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.
- 5.12.15—*commencement*—Lehi’s first experiences with the God of Heaven took place during the first year of the reign of King Zedekiah (1.4). We discover later that it was six hundred years before the birth of Christ that Lehi’s family departed from Jerusalem (see 10.4 and 19.8). The destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians therefore took place in 591 BC.
- 5.12.20—*Zedekiah*—The last king of Judah before the Babylonian captivity. He was named Mattaniah by his parents, Josiah and Hamutal, but was renamed Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar at the age of twenty-one. When Zedekiah proved unsatisfactory during the eleventh year of his reign, most of the sons of the king were put to death as he stood with them, then the king of Babylon had Zedekiah’s eyes thrust out. One of his sons had escaped the vengeance of Nebuchadnezzar, however, and with a group of supporters eventually crossed the ocean to settle in the land of Zarahemla. These Jewish colonists have been traditionally called the Mulekites. It was among the people of Mulek that the sole survivor of the Jaredite civilization, Corinatumr, lived out his last days. More than three hundred years later, the Nephites fleeing from the Lamanites would come in contact with the Mulekites in Zarahemla and the two peoples would become a single nation.
- 5.12.23—*Judah*—The fourth son of Jacob and Leah. The family of Judah would be given the responsibility to preside in Israel, beginning with

1 Ne. 5:11–16
EM 1:180, 378

12 And also a record of the Jews from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah;

1 Ne. 5:12,14
CR86-A 74

the reign of David the King. His posterity would include the mortal Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will reign over the children of men throughout the Millennium and in the eternities. His name means “praised, celebrated”. The marriage of Judah to the daughter of Shuah took place about the year 2221, the year that Jacob returned to the land of Canaan and was living in Succoth east of the river Jordan. He was probably 19 at the time. We do not know why he did not marry while in the land of Padanaram. The daughter of Shuah died about the Adamic Year 2237, at which time Judah had his liaison with his widowed daughter-in-law Tamar, the result of which was the birth of Pharez and Zerah.

5.13 Perhaps we would find the writings of Ahijah, Shemaiah, Oded, Azariah, Hanani, Jehu, Elijah, Micaiah, Jahaziel, Eliezer, and Elisha inscribed with the record of the Jews. Certainly the writings of Obadiah, Joel, Hosea, Jonah, Amos, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and Habakkuk would have appeared upon the Plates. The writings of Daniel and Ezekiel were probably not available to the compilers of the Brass Plates inasmuch as these men were ensconced in the land of Babylon at the time. Nor could there be any mention of Esther for the same reason. Neither would any of the writings of Haggai, Zechariah, Nehemiah, Ezra, or Malachi be found there inasmuch as these great prophets, seers, and priests lived after the time of Lehi’s exodus from Jerusalem. Little, if any, of the later Greek influence would be found in the record of the Jews preserved upon the Brass Plates.

5.13.8—*prophets*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

5.13.21—*Zedekiah*—The last king of Judah before the Babylonian captivity. He was named Mattaniah by his parents, Josiah and Hamutal, but was renamed Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar at the age of twenty-one. When Zedekiah proved unsatisfactory during the eleventh year of his reign, most of the sons of the king were put to death as he stood with them, then the king of Babylon had Zedekiah’s eyes thrust out. One of his sons had escaped the vengeance of Nebuchadnezzar, however, and with a group of supporters eventually crossed the ocean to settle in the land of Zarahemla. These Jewish colonists have been traditionally called the Mulekites. It was among the people of Mulek that the sole survivor of the Jaredite civilization, Corinatumr, lived out his last days. More than three hundred years later, the Nephites fleeing from the Lamanites would come in contact with the Mulekites in Zarahemla and the two peoples would become a single nation.

5.13.34—*Jeremiah*—Certainly not all of the prophecies of Jeremiah would be found on the Plates of Brass, inasmuch as Lehi and his family departed from Jerusalem before Jeremiah had finished his labors.

5.14 The Brass Plates contained the five books of Moses, the record of the Jews, the writings of the prophets who lived before the time of Lehi’s departure from Jerusalem, and his personal genealogy. One wonders as to whom the Plates really pertained, notwithstanding the fact that Laban had them in his possession.

5.14.9—*Lehi*—The first prophet of the Lamanites and the Nephites who left the land of Jerusalem about the year 600 BC. Many of his experiences are recorded in the writings of his son, Nephi, engraved upon the

13 And also the prophecies of the holy prophets, from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah; and also many prophecies which have been spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah.

1 Ne. 5:13
EM 1:180
EM 2:699, 701,
722

{*9—1830*}

14 And it came to pass that my father, Lehi, also found upon the plates of brass a genealogy of his fathers; wherefore he knew that he was a descendant of Joseph; yea, even that Joseph who was the son of Jacob, who was sold into Egypt, and who was preserved by the hand

1 Ne. 5:14
AGQ 1:142
DS 3:262
EM 2:804
CR92-O 52
1 Ne. 5:14–16
EM 2:706

Small Plates of Nephi.

- 5.14.18—*genealogy*—The preservation of this genealogy would continue until the days of Amulek and Alma the Younger in the city of Ammonihah where Amulek would testify to the people that he was a direct descendant of Lehi who was himself a descendant of Joseph through his son Manasseh (see *AL-C 10.1–3*).
- 5.14.31—*Joseph*—The firstborn son of Jacob and his second wife Rachel. Because of grievous transgression on the part of Reuben, the firstborn son of Jacob and his first wife Leah, Joseph was given the patriarchal birthright of the House of Israel. This deference to a younger sibling deeply disturbed ten of his brethren and, as a result of their jealousy, he was sold into slavery. Joseph eventually found prominence in the household of Potiphar, and then in the Egyptian prison, and finally in the Kingdom of Pharaoh. He was instrumental in preserving the lives of his family because of his singular authority among the Egyptians.
- 5.14.41—*Jacob*—The son of Isaac, the grandson of Abraham, and the founder of the House of Israel by means of the covenants received through the faithfulness the patriarchs.
- 5.14.46—*Egypt*—A land naturally watered by the Nile River, the delta region of the same being luxuriant as one could hope for in terms of animal and vegetable life.

5.15 Joseph testified to his brethren, after the death of Jacob, that they ought not to expect any reprisals from him, notwithstanding the great injustices that they had done him. He viewed the whole matter as part of the economy of God by which he was to be instrumental in preserving the lives of his family and in fulfilling the prophecies of both himself and his father. We may look upon that episode in Joseph's life with the same assurance of God's intervention as we do when we witness the exodus from Egypt by the hand of Moses. The miracles may not seem as obvious, but they are there.

- 5.15.15—*Egypt*—A land naturally watered by the Nile River, the delta region of the same being luxuriant as one could hope for in terms of animal and vegetable life.

5.16 Laban had custody of the Brass Plates because he also pertained to the family of Joseph. This does not necessarily mean that Laban was their proprietor. It would seem reasonable to assume that Lehi's family had just as much of a right to the Plates as anyone had, particularly once the Lord God of Israel commanded Lehi to procure them. Laban was clearly an expatriot from the northern Kingdom of Israel as well.

- 5.16.5—*Lehi*—The first prophet of the Lamanites and the Nephites who left the land of Jerusalem about the year 600 BC. Many of his experiences are recorded in the writings of his son, Nephi, engraved upon the Small Plates of Nephi.
- 5.16.14—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.
- 5.16.20—*Joseph*—The firstborn son of Jacob and his second wife Rachel. Because of grievous transgression on the part of Reuben, the firstborn son of Jacob and his first wife Leah, Joseph was given the patriarchal birthright of the House of Israel. This deference to a younger sibling deeply disturbed ten of his brethren and, as a result of their jealousy, he

of the Lord, that he might preserve his father, Jacob, and all his household from perishing with famine.

15 And they were also led out of captivity and out of the land of Egypt, by that same God who had preserved them.

16 And thus my father, Lehi, did discover the genealogy of his fathers. And Laban also was a descendant of Joseph, wherefore he and his fathers had kept the records.

1 Ne. 5:16
EM 1:198

was sold into slavery. Joseph eventually found prominence in the household of Potipher, and then in the Egyptian prison, and finally in the Kingdom of Pharaoh. He was instrumental in preserving the lives of his family because of his singular authority among the Egyptians.

{¶—1830}

5.17 As is the case with almost all personal, faithful study of the writings of the prophets of God, Lehi finds access to great spiritual resources which provide him with personal revelation. He is empowered to speak of his family, generations upon generations of his children who would be blessed because Nephi and his brethren had been diligent in obtaining the record engraved upon the Brass Plates.

17 And now when my father saw all these things, he was filled with the Spirit, and began to prophesy concerning his seed—

1 Ne. 5:17–19
EM 1:346

5.18 This is a prophecy which has only been fulfilled in part. While the Nephite nation survived, during a thousand year period of time, the Brass Plates were constantly available to bless and strengthen the spiritual lives of Lehi's descendants. Since the time of Moroni, however, the Brass Plates have been kept with the other Nephite records in the depository established by Mormon. During the long ages of apostasy that followed the destruction of the Nephite civilization, the Lamanites suffered in ignorance. With the coming of the Europeans to this hemisphere, however, the record of the Jews, including the writings of Moses and many of the other prophets, were committed into the hands of the indigenous peoples of North and South America. With the translation of the Book of Mormon and the establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, many of the posterity of Lehi have more of the writings that could be found upon the Brass Plates. It is by no means impossible that there will come a day in the which the Brass Plates will be brought forth and their writings made available to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people that constitute Lehi's posterity. Needless to say there will be other peoples who will have access to this ancient record as well.

18 That these plates of brass should go forth unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people who were of his seed.

1 Ne. 5:18–19
MD 103
MLM 113

5.19 All of the prophets of God who labored in behalf of the descendants of Lehi have gone to extraordinary lengths to preserve all of the records of the Nephites, together with the Brass Plates and other ancient artifacts committed into the hands of Lehi and his sons.

19 Wherefore, he said that these plates of brass should never perish; neither should they be dimmed any more by time. And he prophesied many things concerning his seed.

5.19.16—*dimmed*—It would appear that at some point the Brass Plates had been dimmed by time. One wonders as to how frequently the Brass Plates had been resorted to by Laban or any of his immediate family while they were in their possession. For Laban the Plates could have been hardly anything more than a family heirloom.

5.19.23—*prophesied*—Certainly the Vision of the Tree of Life and the Allegory of the Olive Tree served as partial catalysts for the things which Lehi had to say to his family. The Allegory specifically would have been found on the Brass Plates, attributed to the prophet Zenos.

{¶—1830}

5.20 Lehi had received the commission to repent of his sins and walk uprightly before the Lord. He had taken upon himself the task of testifying to his peers of the coming destruction of the city and the nation if they did not repent. He had borne witness of the coming of the Messiah to redeem the people of the Lord from their abominations. Lehi had obeyed the Lord in his departure from the land of Jerusalem, providing his family with all of the necessities which were undoubtedly indicated by the spirit. He had sent his sons back to their place of origin to obtain the sacred record that would be the means of preserving the spiritual lives of his posterity for many generations. Nephi in his turn, had followed all of the specific directions that had been

20 And it came to pass that thus far I and my father had kept the commandments wherewith the Lord had commanded us.

given him of his father, and by way of the spirit of the Lord.

5.21 Obtaining the record inscribed on the Brass Plates had been a singularly miraculous adventure that was little appreciated by Laman and Lemuel. Nephi, however, was cognizant as to their immediate and future value to them as a family and nation. He also knew in no uncertain terms that their acquisition had not been accomplished through serendipity, but rather by the power and inspiration of God the eternal Father.

5.22 One wonders if the Brass Plates were consulted from time to time in the wilderness, especially when very specific and detailed ordinances were performed. Certainly Nephi used them extensively while teaching his family as to how they ought to conduct themselves in the wilderness and elsewhere.

6.1 In the opening five chapters of the Book of Mormon, that which constituted “Chapter I” in the original formatting of the text, Nephi recounted events surrounding the prophecies of his father, Lehi, the exodus of the family from Jerusalem and the retrieval of the Brass Plates. The historical narrative of “Chapter II”, comprised of Chapters 6 through 9 of the current edition, relates the invitation given to the family of Ishmael to join Lehi in the wilderness and Lehi’s Vision of the Tree of Life.

6.1.4—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

6.1.17–18—*my record*—Nephi had already compiled a vast daily record of his life and ministry which, when once committed to metal plates, became known as the Large Plates of Nephi. We are reading here from that part of his record which is commonly referred to as the Small Plates of Nephi.

6.1.29–30—*these plates*—In reference to the Small Plates of Nephi, a record begun some twenty years after he had fashioned the more extensive record known as the Large Plates of Nephi (see 2 N 5.28–33). Inasmuch as Nephi had already transferred the genealogy of his father’s family on to the Large Plates, he did not think it necessary to transcribe it to the Small Plates.

6.1.41—*record*—Lehi also kept of an account of his proceedings, although we do not know the kind of medium that he used to preserve his history. It is clear, however, that Nephi was concerned for their durability inasmuch as he felt it was necessary to copy his father’s history on to the Large Plates of Nephi when he first began the Large Plates (see 19.1).

6.2 It would suffice Amulek to say that Lehi was a descendant of Joseph

21 And we had obtained the records which the Lord had commanded us, and searched them and found that they were desirable; yea, even of great worth unto us, insomuch that we could preserve the commandments of the Lord unto our children.

22 Wherefore, it was wisdom in the Lord that we should carry them with us, as we journeyed in the wilderness towards the land of promise.

{Chapter II}
(Chapter 6)

{9—1830}

1 AND now I, Nephi, do not give the genealogy of my fathers in this part of my record; neither at any time shall I give it after upon these plates which I am writing; for it is given in the record which has been kept by my father; wherefore, I do not write it in this work.

2 For it sufficeth me to say that

1 Ne. 5:21
CR92-O 37
* p. 16

1 Ne. 6
EM 1:142, 145,
213
EM 2:855

through his eldest son Manasseh (see *AL-C 10.1-3*).

6.2.12—*Joseph*—The firstborn son of Jacob and his second wife Rachel.

Because of grievous transgression on the part of Reuben, the firstborn son of Jacob and his first wife Leah, Joseph was given the patriarchal birthright of the House of Israel. This deference to a younger sibling deeply disturbed ten of his brethren and, as a result of their jealousy, he was sold into slavery. Joseph eventually found prominence in the household of Potipher, and then in the Egyptian prison, and finally in the Kingdom of Pharaoh. He was instrumental in preserving the lives of his family because of his singular authority among the Egyptians.

6.3 The Small Plates of Nephi were dedicated to the spiritual affairs of Nephi and his people, the manner in which they were led and guided by the spirit in their view of themselves and their brethren. Again, the complete record of Lehi had already been preserved on the Large Plates and, given the limited space which Nephi had, he was loath to duplicate much of this history, as spiritually motivated as it may have been.

6.4 Nephi had long since communed with the great Jehovah, knew him intimately and in many respects, like Abraham, was a friend of God. Because Nephi had found peace, hope, and comfort in his relationship with the God of his ancestors, he wished all of his posterity, and the posterity of his brothers, would have the opportunity to know Him as well as he did. This has always been the attitude of the true prophets of God the Father and the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

6.4.19—*Abraham*—The undisputed “Father of the Faithful”. Modern biblical scholars are generally kind to Abraham as are most theologians in the sister religious of Judaism. The spiritual stature of Abraham is, for the most part, immeasurable by man. Abraham is one of the Lord God’s noblemen, whose faith and confidence in the divine word are equaled or excelled by few who have come into mortality upon this earth. Removing the Lord Jesus Christ from the list of candidates, however, would probably render our estimation of Abraham all but absolute. Abraham was one of three sons born to Terah during a millennium of poverty and famine. Through Abraham’s ministrations the promises made to the ancient fathers were preserved and re-established in earnest. In one of the most tender of moments recorded in secular or ecclesiastical history, the Lord God of Heaven instructed Abraham in the nature of the greatest gift that a loving God may bestow upon his creation when he asked for the sacrificed life of his son Isaac.

6.4.25—*Isaac*—The only son of the union between Abraham and Sarah. There was some strife between Isaac and Ishmael, the son of Hagar, as there had been between Sarah and her handmaiden who had been elevated to the role of wife to Abraham as the result of Sarah’s barrenness. Because Sarah was the first wife, the wife of the covenant, her son Isaac took precedence over the elder half-brother. The animosity engendered during those early years has not completely abated, even into modern times. Isaac was an active participant in the “sacrifice” required by God of his father Abraham.

6.4.30—*Jacob*—The younger of the twin sons born to Isaac and Rebecca. The elder son, Esau, despised his spiritual inheritance by marrying outside of the perpetual covenant established between God and his grandfather Abraham. The lot fell to the faithful Jacob who was then

we are descendants of Joseph.

3 And it mattereth not to me that I am particular to give a full account of all the things of my father, for they cannot be written upon these plates, for I desire the room that I may write of the things of God.

4 For the fulness of mine intent is that I may persuade men to come unto the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and be saved.

1 Ne. 6:3-4, 6
CR86-A 75

1 Ne. 6:4
MD 322
DNTEC 2:279
PM 29, 164
EM 1:145

forced to flee for his life. Jacob's name was changed to Israel, and with his four wives founded the House of Israel, that covenant family by whom the entire population of the earth was to be instructed and redeemed.

6.5 One wonders what Nephi thought would please the world. Certainly there are those who would be intrigued to know precisely where the quarry was where he molten the ore for his plates, both Large and Small. Certainly there must be a metallurgist somewhere whose pulse races at the possibility of knowing exactly how Nephi compounded his alloys. Needless to say there are genealogists who would be delighted to add any and all family history materials regarding Lehi's ancestors into a database somewhere. Adventurers no doubt would pant after a detailed map of Lehi's journeys in the wilderness, the daily barometric readings in conjunction with his transoceanic voyage, and an exact platting of his settlement and the settlements of his posterity in the promised land. This, however, Nephi eschews for the most part, and confines himself to that which he esteems to be of most worth: the council and commandments of the God of Heaven.

6.6 We do not know exactly how many physical plates Nephi fashioned for himself and for those who would follow after him as he contemplated the Small Plates. We know that Mormon thought of the Small Plates with such high esteem that he elected to include them with his own compilation once he discovered them. Thus, when Joseph Smith came in possession of the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated, he actually had in his hands these very plates which Nephi had called the Small Plates of Nephi, inasmuch as Mormon had appended them to his collection of plates. We are told that the record of Mormon was approximately six inches thick, two-thirds of which had been sealed. This implies that the entire text of the Book of Mormon, including the lost record of the Book of Lehi, was taken from approximately two inches of plates. Included in that two inches would be these Small Plates of Nephi.

7.1 Note that in the original formatting of the Book of Mormon that this verse was included in the same paragraph with the verses of the previous chapter. There is a sweet irony associated with Lehi's prophetic response to the Brass Plates. He apparently waxed eloquent in the midst of his little family regarding the generations of descendants who would regard him as their common ancestor. All this spoken in the company of young men who had no prospects for wives in the bleak desolation of the wilderness on their way to a depopulated promised land. The divinely revealed suggestion that the four brothers should return to Jerusalem and invite Ishmael and his family of daughters to accompany them in their sojourn must have made sense even to Laman and Lemuel; they apparently made little or no complaint about the arduous return trip to Jerusalem

7.1.13—*Lehi*—The first prophet of the Lamanites and the Nephites who left the land of Jerusalem about the year 600 BC. Many of his experiences are recorded in the writings of his son, Nephi, engraved upon the Small Plates of Nephi.

7.1.19—*prophesying*—Although little is recorded here regarding Lehi's prophecies, that he made extensive commentary regarding the future of

5 Wherefore, the things which are pleasing unto the world I do not write, but the things which are pleasing unto God and unto those who are not of the world.

6 Wherefore, I shall give commandment unto my seed, that they shall not occupy these plates with things which are not of worth unto the children of men.

{Chapter II; continued}
(Chapter 7)

1 AND now I would that ye might know, that after my father, Lehi, had made an end of prophesying concerning his seed, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto him again, saying that it was not meet for him, Lehi, that he should take his family into the wilderness alone; but that his sons should take daughters to wife, that they might raise up seed unto the Lord in the land of promise.

1 Ne. 7
EM 1:142, 145,
213
EM 2:827, 855
EM 3:1005
1 Ne. 7:1
EM 4:1577

his posterity, in conjunction with the Brass Plates, is indicated in 5.17–19. He will have more to say below in concert with his Vision of the Tree of Life.

7.2 The first commandment given to Lehi and his sons was to obtain the Brass Plates from Laban that they might have the commandments of the Lord, that they might train up their posterity in righteousness. This second commandment was given that the children of Lehi might be able to actually have posterity once they reached the promised land.

7.2.13—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

7.2.24—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

7.2.28—*Ishmael*—That Lehi and Ishmael were acquainted prior to this time seems certain. It would seem somewhat reasonable to assume also, that the sons of Lehi were acquainted with the children of Ishmael, at least casually.

7.3 The departure into the wilderness for the second time from the tents of Lehi seems to be less fraught with distress, consternation, and murmuring on the part of the elder brothers.

7.3.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

7.3.23—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

7.4 One wonders at the reaction of Ishmael in this attempt to keep the second commandment given to Lehi’s family. We are not told who the designated spokesman for the four brothers was, but one might be led to believe that Nephi may very well have been the eloquent voice on this occasion. Laman and Lemuel may have welcomed the company of the daughters of Ishmael in their wilderness journey, but their approach might have been just a little too anxious and transparent. Nephi was filled with the Spirit of the Lord, and it is most likely that he found in his future father-in-law a kindred spirit who knew that what Nephi was saying was of the Lord.

7.4.14—*Ishmael*—That Lehi and Ishmael were acquainted prior to this time seems certain. It would seem somewhat reasonable to assume also, that the sons of Lehi were acquainted with the children of Ishmael, at

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2 And it came to pass that the Lord commanded him that I, Nephi, and my brethren, should again return unto the land of Jerusalem, and bring down Ishmael and his family into the wilderness.

1 Ne. 7:2
AF 321
1 Ne. 7:2–6
AF 321
1 Ne. 7:2–5
EM 1:193
EM 2:704

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3 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did again, with my brethren, go forth into the wilderness to go up to Jerusalem.

4 And it came to pass that we went up unto the house of Ishmael, and we did gain favor in the sight of Ishmael, insomuch that we did speak unto him the words of the Lord.

least casually.

7.5 There is a pattern here. Those who are receptacles of the Holy Ghost are able to accomplish the tasks set before them. In this case, Nephi and Ishmael sensed in each other a common resonance of that which was good and holy. The hearts of the other members of the household are likewise softened, at least for a time.

7.5.10—*soften*—It is interesting to note why it was that Nephi did not rebel against his father when his elder brethren did so. By his own testimony we are expressly told that it was because he poured out his whole soul to God that he might know of those things of which his father had been teaching (see 2.26–27). Ishmael was one who, in the absence of tangible evidence, sought counsel from the Father as well. It would be interesting to know whether he had any misgivings about Laman and Lemuel.

7.5.14—*Ishmael*—That Lehi and Ishmael were acquainted prior to this time seems certain. It would seem somewhat reasonable to assume also, that the sons of Lehi were acquainted with the children of Ishmael, at least casually.

7.6 One wonders as to what precipitated the rebellion. Clearly the eldest sons of Lehi were instrumental in stirring up animosity. Did they grumble about the loss of their father's wealth? Certainly what luxury and the means to maintain that luxury, were left behind. We cannot possibly imagine that Ishmael's instructions from the Lord would have been much different from those given to Lehi. Did Laman and Lemuel perceive a way by which they might reclaim the lifestyle that they once enjoyed? Certainly they would target the sons of Ishmael with the folly of taking to the desolation of the wilderness when they might enjoy all of the comforts that their father's abandoned wealth might produce. The numerical odds of the rebellion favored Laman and Lemuel's party. Eight adults rebelled against seven; four young men and their consorts against three men and four women. In terms of youth and physical strength, Laman and Lemuel's party had the advantage.

7.6.14—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah's sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

7.6.16—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

7.6.23—*Ishmael*—That Lehi and Ishmael were acquainted prior to this time seems certain. It would seem somewhat reasonable to assume also, that the sons of Lehi were acquainted with the children of Ishmael, at least casually.

7.6.33—*rebel*—Other scholars have suggested that it may have been the rebellion of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, against Babylonian rule that gave Laman and Lemuel and the others some reason for supposing that Jeremiah's prophecies would not come to pass. Jehoiakim had enlisted the support of the Egyptians and there seemed to be every possibility for success.

7.6.40—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His poster-

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*5 And it came to pass that the Lord did soften the heart of Ishmael, and also his household, inasmuch that they took their journey with us down into the wilderness to the tent of our father.

* p. 17

6 And it came to pass that as we journeyed in the wilderness, behold Laman and Lemuel, and two of the daughters of Ishmael, and the two sons of Ishmael and their families, did rebel against us; yea, against me, Nephi, and Sam, and their father, Ishmael, and his wife, and his three other daughters.

1 Ne. 7:6

EM 1:193

EM 4:1579

1 Ne. 7:6–21

EM 2:705

ity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

6.6.42—*Sam*—The third son of Lehi and Sariah who tended to follow the direction of his younger brother Nephi. He and his posterity were considered generally to be Nephites.

7.6.54—*daughters*—No doubt these three girls would prove to be the faithful companions of Nephi, Sam, and Zoram (see 16.7)

7.7 The sons and daughters of Ishmael had at one point been convinced that their departure from Jerusalem had been inspired of the Lord, or at least they had had explicit confidence in their father Ishmael. The insidious inveigling by the two eldest sons of Lehi, however, must have become more insistent and irresistible as their caravan moved farther and farther into the wilderness. Like the children of Israel in their exodus from Egypt, some of the children of Ishmael began to respond to the appeal of the creature comforts that a return to their home in Jerusalem offered them.

7.7.19—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

7.8 The candor of Nephi’s questions ought to give us pause. Why would the older boys be as rebellious in their feelings towards their father, Lehi, toward the commandments of the Lord, and against any and all of those who sought to work righteousness? The answer is simple: these young men were guilty of either sins of omission or sins of commission which dulled their sensitivity to the things of the Spirit. Laman and Lemuel were the elder sons of a righteous man, a prophet of God. Their shared experience with their parents should have made them far superior to Nephi in their dealing with God, yet they had apparently made choices in their lives up to that point which had made them far less susceptible to the whisperings of the Spirit of the Lord than was Nephi. This fact stunned the young man.

7.8.4—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

7.8.22—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

7.8.24—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

7.9 Were the sons of Lehi so corrupt that they could not remember any of those things which they had experienced? They had been faithless and skeptical every step of the way in their journey to and from Jerusalem. They had not hearkened to the voice of the Lord because they had not done what was necessary to prepare their minds and hearts to hear His voice. They did

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7 And it came to pass in the which rebellion, they were desirous to return unto the land of Jerusalem.

8 And now I, Nephi, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, therefore I spake unto them, saying, yea, even unto Laman and unto Lemuel: Behold ye are mine elder brethren, and how is it that ye are so hard in your hearts, and so blind in your minds, that ye have need that I, your younger brother, should speak unto you, yea, and set an example for you?

9 How is it that ye have not hearkened unto the word of the Lord?

not pray; they had little or no interest in the scriptures. They did nothing to enhance their spiritual lives and therefore they were easily distracted by the circumstances of a fallen world which sometimes appealed to them and sometimes frightened them.

7.10 May we suggest that neither Laman nor Lemuel had mentioned anything of the visit which they had received from the angel of God? Perhaps the fact that they were beating their younger brothers to death at the time may have had something to do with their reticence. Had they shared their viciousness with the sons and daughters of Ishmael? Unlikely. It was nothing to be proud of. The fact that Nephi was bringing this sordid episode to their attention must have deeply disturbed them, particularly when they were attempting to impress at least two of the daughters of Ishmael.

7.11 Had the elder brothers been forthcoming in describing the success that they had experienced with regard to the obtaining of the Brass Plates from Laban? Again, highly unlikely, inasmuch as they had not been particularly illustrious in their conduct at the time. They had lingered outside the walls of Jerusalem waiting for Nephi to accomplish the errand upon which all of them had been sent. Additionally, they had not yet gained a witness that the adventure had been worth the effort involved, save that which their “foolish” father had expressed when he finally held them in his hands.

7.11.27—*Laban*—Laban, though also a resident of Jerusalem, was in exile as was Lehi and his family. Neither had inheritance in Judea inasmuch as they were both of the family of Joseph. Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, but we are not informed as from which of the two sons of Joseph Laban was descended.

7.12 Nephi had testified to his older brothers before in this vein, after they had failed in their first attempts to obtain the plates (see 3.15 and 4.1–3). They had numerous scriptural witnesses that what Nephi said was true. They had personal experiences which should have convinced them that both Lehi and Nephi were inspired men. Laman and Lemuel were consciously choosing to ignore all that the Lord had done for them and was able to do for them, primarily because they chaffed at their younger brother’s words, resenting his seemingly unquenchable enthusiasm for doing those things which had been commanded of them.

7.13 Nephi bears his testimony to his brethren regarding the land of promise and that they would, as a consequence of their faith, obtain that land as an inheritance for their posterity. There would come a time when they would know for a certainty that the city of Jerusalem and environs had indeed been destroyed. Lehi would have a vision to that effect, one which he would unhesitatingly share with his children (see *2 NE-C 1.4*). This revelation came once Lehi and his family had arrived at the promised land and after they had begun to appreciate the wondrous blessings which had come into their lives. They may have been more receptive to Lehi’s prophecies by that point, at least while he lived. The perfect proof of the destruction of Jerusalem would come many generations later when the Nephites finally came in contact with the remnants of a people who had fled the city at the very hour of destruction; a people who would also make their way to the promised land by divine intervention (see *OM-C 1.13–16*).

7.13.40—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally

10 How is it that ye have forgotten that ye have seen an angel of the Lord?

11 Yea, and how is it that ye have forgotten what great things the Lord hath done for us, in delivering us out of the hands of Laban, and also that we should obtain the record?

12 Yea, and how is it that ye have forgotten that the Lord is able to do all things according to his will, for the children of men, if it so be that they exercise faith in him? Wherefore, let us be faithful to him.

13 And if it so be that we are faithful to him, we shall obtain the land of promise; and ye shall know at some future period that the word of the Lord shall be fulfilled concerning the destruction of Jerusalem; for all things which the Lord hath spoken concerning the destruction of Jerusalem must be fulfilled.

1 Ne. 7:12
CR80-O 105

1 Ne. 7:13
EM 1:378

derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

7.14 The inhabitants of Jerusalem and environs had ripened in iniquity, filled with all manner of abominations. Their rejection of the prophets, seers, and revelators of God was a reflection of their rejection of the Lord God Himself.

7.14.11—*strive*—The Holy Ghost, Light of Christ, and all other divine influences will labor for the salvation and exaltation of men until they willfully reject those godly appeals for repentance. The Father, the Son, and the Spirit of God will entice, gently persuade, and invite, but never compel. Thus, when the Spirit ceases to strive with mankind, it betokens an utter rejection of all that is holy.

7.14.20—*prophets*—The Jews were no longer receptive to the writings of the ancient seers, nor were they of a mind to hearken to the counsel of the living prophets such as Jeremiah and Lehi (see 1.4.39–40). There were, in addition, false prophets a plenty. These, however, were welcomed by the king, the priests, and a good portion of the people

7.14.22—*Jeremiah*—A priest born in the city of Anathoth who directly opposed the faint hope of deliverance from the Babylonians generated by the alliance between Jehoiakim and the Egyptians (see 7.6.33). Jeremiah is cast into prison many times during his life. The imprisonment which is spoken of here is probably not the one spoken of in the 37th chapter of Jeremiah.

7.14.38—*father*—The Jews may not have grabbed Lehi by the neck and driven him out of his inheritance, but they did make his life so miserable that he was quite receptive to the commandments of the Lord to depart from Jerusalem.

7.15 Nephi’s candor with his brethren and members of Ishmael’s family is remarkable. His clarity is unequivocal. They cannot rejoin a fallen society without suffering the effects of its imminent destruction. To return to Jerusalem at that hour would be tantamount to returning to Sodom or Gomorrah after judgment had been levied against those two wicked cities. Consider Lot’s wife who did no more than to turn herself about to look upon that which had once been her home. Laman and the others were free, if they really believed their own press, to return to Jerusalem, but Nephi testifies to them that they will directly suffer the consequences for having done so. One might observe that if the rebels were free to return, why not just allow them to do so? Why make all of this fuss with those who would be recalcitrant during their entire lifetimes and would pass that truculence on to their posterity? Clearly the survival of the colony depended upon all of the members of both families making the journey. It was just as vital as were the possession of the Brass Plates and the opportunity for Lehi’s sons to have spouses. Therefore, the Spirit of the Lord moved Nephi to be rather forceful in his arguments, just as he had been persuaded that the death of Laban was in the best interests of everyone concerned (see 4.10–18).

7.15.13—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the

14 For behold, the Spirit of the Lord ceaseth soon to strive with them; for behold, they have rejected the prophets, and Jeremiah have they cast into prison. And they have sought to take away the life of my father, insomuch that they have driven him out of the land.

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15 Now behold, I say unto you that if ye will return unto Jerusalem ye shall also perish with them. And now, if ye have choice, go up to the land, and remember the words which I speak unto you, that if ye go ye will also perish; for thus the Spirit of the Lord constraineth me that I should speak.

1 Ne. 7:14
MD 631
PM 33
EM 2:722
CR88-O 102

same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

7.16 Laman and Lemuel had been willing to ignore all of those experiences which had proven that Lehi and Nephi were following the mind and will of the Lord when they set about accomplishing the tasks that had been assigned to them. They ignored the miraculous manner in which they had escaped the machinations of their murderous nemesis. They ignored the miraculous fashion by which they were able to obtain the plates. It is somewhat understandable that they had been willing to ignore their rather bad conduct prior to the appearance of the angel of God who came to save Nephi and Sam from destruction at the hands of their own brothers. They apparently wished to impress the members of Ishmael’s family in order to escape the mentorship of their younger brother, or even to obtain supremacy over Nephi through brute force. One wonders at what point the other members of the company began to perceive the dark road upon which Laman and Lemuel were walking. At what point did premeditated murder become odious to the sons and daughters of Ishmael?

7.16.9—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

7.17 Once Nephi had been bound did the company begin preparations to return to Jerusalem? It would seem likely. How could Laman and Lemuel return to the tent of their father having slain their younger brother? Certainly not everyone in the company could be silenced about the murder. The scriptures are replete with incidents of the servants of God having been bound or held in captivity of some kind. Their escape from bondage came in a variety of ways. Some were rescued by divinely appointed deliverers, others were liberated through earthquakes or other seemingly natural occurrences. Still others were released by angelic ministrants who untied bonds, opened gates, and blinded adversaries. In Nephi’s case, much like that of Samson’s, he is given physical strength sufficient to return to his assigned responsibilities.

7.18 How would have Laman and Lemuel have explained away Nephi’s release from bondage? Certainly they would not have attributed it to the proper source. They might have accused Sam, Ishmael, or one of the unrebelling members of Ishmael’s family. At that point they would have particularly frustrated at their situation. Their struggle for power within the company was being subverted by unknown agents.

7.19 The irritation of Laman and Lemuel increased because they were not getting away with their subversion of the family of Ishmael. Nephi may have been bound with cords and left for wild animals to devour, but he had somehow entered back into the mix once again. We are not told precisely what the three members of Ishmael’s family had to say to Laman and Lemuel, but clearly their efforts were instrumental in preserving Nephi’s life for the moment.

7.19.22–25—*one of the daughters*—The romantics among us may wish to suggest that it was this particular daughter that ultimately became the spouse of Nephi (see 16.7). One wonders, however, how much influence that girl would have had on the hardened hearts of Laman and

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16 And it came to pass that when I, Nephi, had spoken these words unto my brethren, they were angry with me. And it came to pass that they did lay their hands upon me, for behold, they were exceedingly wroth, and they did bind me with cords, *for they sought to take away my life, that they might leave me in the wilderness to be devoured by wild beasts.

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17 But it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord, saying: O Lord, according to my faith which is in thee, 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.

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18 And it came to pass that when I had said these words, behold, the bands were loosed from off my hands and feet, and I stood before my brethren, and I spake unto them again.

19 And it came to pass that they were angry with me again, and sought to lay hands upon me; but behold, one of the daughters of Ishmael, yea, and also her mother, and one of the sons of Ishmael, did plead with my brethren, insomuch that they did soften their hearts; and they did cease striving to take away my life.

1 Ne. 7:16
AF 321
EM 2:801

* p. 18

1 Ne. 7:19
EM 4:1579

Lemuel. It seems more likely that it was one of the two daughters who had rebelled against their father who had entertained second thoughts about what was transpiring in their company (see 7.6). She, together with one of her brothers, earnestly pleading for the life of Nephi would have been far more effective. The balance of power shifted considerably as these two members of their rebellious party switched allegiance in this attempted murder.

7.19.27—*Ishmael*—That Lehi and Ishmael were acquainted prior to this time seems certain. It would seem somewhat reasonable to assume also, that the sons of Lehi were acquainted with the children of Ishmael, at least casually.

7.20 Again, we may not know the arguments given by the mother and the two siblings in favor of Nephi, but whatever the rhetorical devices, employed, Laman and Lemuel were brought to a point where they acknowledged that their position on the proposed assassination of their brother was untenable. What brought the two older brothers to bow before their younger brother? Was it true repentance? Was it embarrassment? Wherein lay their sorrow? Precisely which actions did they now consider to be wicked? Did they have any remorse for their initial rebellion, or were they only distressed that they had attempted his life? Given the subsequent events in the wilderness, in the land of Bountiful, upon the waters of the great deep, and in the promised land, we may safely conclude that their irritation at Nephi's leadership was not repented of at this moment.

7.21 Nephi's kindness and generosity must have been somewhat galling to his brothers. They most certainly would not have been as gracious had their roles been reversed. Yet, Nephi's open forgiveness would have paved the way by which the entire company could continue to the valley of Lemuel to be united with the rest of Lehi's family. Had Nephi's forgiveness been tainted in any way, his elder brothers would have felt great discomfort in having to face their father. Nephi may have told Laman and Lemuel that it would be in the best interests of the family to never speak of these things again, that he had no intention of recounting the rebellion in the wilderness to Lehi. Those of us with a cynical bent might have required more of Laman and Lemuel in their requisite prayers than did Nephi.

7.22 Again, we may wonder as to the motives behind the sacrifices of each of the members of the company (see 5.9). No doubt there were those in the valley of Lemuel who sought for forgiveness from the God of Heaven, for having rebelled against the Lord's anointed. Others without question would have been prepared to offer sacrifice in thanksgiving for their having arrived safely at their appointed destination. The burnt offerings, again, would have been an opportunity for the entire company to reaffirm their determination to live by every word that proceeded forth from the mouth of God, to proceed forth into the wilderness toward the promised land, recognizing their complete dependence upon the compassion and mercy of the Lord God of Israel.

7.22.28—*Ishmael*—That Lehi and Ishmael were acquainted prior to this time seems certain. It would seem somewhat reasonable to assume also, that the sons of Lehi were acquainted with the children of Ishmael, at least casually.

7.22.51—*sacrifice*—We must conclude that the offering of sacrifice by Lehi and his family, together with all other offerings demanded by the

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20 And it came to pass that they were sorrowful, because of their wickedness, insomuch that they did bow down before me, and did plead with me that I would forgive them of the thing that they had done against me.

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21 And it came to pass that I did frankly forgive them all that they had done, and I did exhort them that they would pray unto the Lord their God for forgiveness. And it came to pass that they did so. And after they had done praying unto the Lord we did again travel on our journey towards the tent of our father.

{¶—1830}

22 And it came to pass that we did come down unto the tent of our father. And after I and my brethren and all the house of Ishmael had come down unto the tent of my father, they did give thanks unto the Lord their God; and they did offer sacrifice and burnt offerings unto him.

1 Ne. 7:22
MA 110
AF 453

Law of Moses, were accomplished by a priesthood other than that possessed by the priests in Jerusalem. All those sacrifices at the Temple were directed by the presiding authorities of the Aaronic and Levitical Priesthoods. Lehi and his family pertained to the tribe of Manasseh and not to the tribe of Levi. Therefore, they must have conducted their worship of the Lord God under the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood, an authority after the Order of the Son of God which can administer in all of the ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and of the Law of Moses.

7.22.53–54—*burnt offerings*—An act of consecration and rededication to all of the principles and ordinances pertaining to the fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The animal in these sorts of offering were completely consumed upon the altar.

8.1 One wonders at what appears to be a *non sequitor*. That there is a great importance attached to the fact that Lehi and his family had preserved unto themselves seed-grain that could be used throughout their journeys in the wilderness cannot be doubted. The question is when was this gathering made and why it is mentioned here in this part of the narrative. In 2.4, Nephi tells us that his father took nothing with him into the wilderness save his family, provisions, and their tents. In the literal meaning of the word “provision”, Lehi would have foreseen what would have been sufficient food for himself and his immediate family to survive for a period of time in the wilderness. With the addition of Ishmael and his family, the amount of required food would have increased considerably. When did Lehi discover that he would have to increase the amount of their stores? The implication of this verse in this particular place suggests that Lehi and Ishmael together with their families remained in the valley of Lemuel for a long period of time, perhaps as much as a year, planting and harvesting more grain and other consumables. At some point in the preparations, Lehi was told that he should bring seeds of fruit trees which could be used to create plantations once they arrived in the promised land. It seems likely, given the intrusion of this verse just prior to Lehi’s dream regarding the Tree of Life, that a substantial amount of gathering of these fruit seeds may have taken place while the company was encamped in the valley of Lemuel.

8.2 The particular revelation which Lehi had regarding his posterity is often referred to as Lehi’s Dream or the Vision of the Tree of Life. Throughout the narrative of the Book of Mormon, allusions to this prescient dream abound. Nephi will have a rather extended experience with his father’s vision of the Tree of Life (see chapters 11 through 14). He will have the opportunity to explain the dream for the benefit of his brethren (see 15.21–36). Other prophets, seers, and revelators of the western hemisphere utilized images from the Vision of the Tree of Life to enhance the power of their own teachings.

8.2.24—*dream*—It is common practice to think of a dream as a vision which takes place while one is asleep.

8.2.33—*vision*—A vision is usually occurs during waking hours, like that which took place in 1.5–6. Nephi’s experience with the same imagery appears to be a “waking vision” rather than a dream. A dream inspired

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(Chapter 8)

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1 AND it came to pass that we had gathered together all manner of seeds of every kind, both of grain of every kind, and also of the seeds of fruit of every kind.

1 Ne. 8
MD 208, 824
DNTC 2:445
EM 1: 63, 142,
145, 188
EM 2:691, 827,
855
EM 3:1004
EM 4:1486
CR92-O 37
1 Ne. 8:1
EM 1:178
1 Ne. 8:1–38
EM 3:1285

2 And it came to pass that while my father tarried in the wilderness he spake unto us, saying: Behold, I have dreamed a dream; or, in other words, I have seen a vision.

1 Ne. 8:2
MD 208
MM 1:338
EM 1:180
1 Ne. 8:2–32
EM 3:1225

by the influence of the Spirit of God is often referred to as a “night vision”. This may be Lehi’s meaning in this place.

8.3 What is clear from Lehi’s comment here is that the dream was given to Lehi in his role as the patriarch of the family. There is no question that the dream contains elements which may be understood universally with regard to the entire human race, yet Lehi understood the dream in terms of his own posterity. Lehi had every reason to believe that Nephi and Sam would find eternal life because of their personal actions in the dream. It was a prophecy utilizing elaborate metaphors in combination with real characters.

8.3.21—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

8.3.25—*Sam*—The third son of Lehi and Sariah who tended to follow the direction of his younger brother Nephi. He and his posterity were considered generally to be Nephites.

8.4 Lehi had plenty to worry about with regard to the personal conduct in life of his two eldest sons, but the dream amplified his concern for them. Sam, Nephi, and Sariah willingly hearken to the voice of their father and husband, and press forward to partake of the fruit of the Tree of Life. In the dream, Laman and Lemuel ignore the solicitations of their father and make a direct path toward that building which represented the pride and mockery of the world

8.4.3—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

8.4.5—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

8.4.13—*methought*—A wonderful, though fading reflexive verb derived from Old English which means “It seemed to me”

8.4.23—*wilderness*—Lehi perceives himself, in the beginning, in a “wilderness”, then he is led through a “waste” apparently cut from the same bolt of cloth (see 8.7), and finally he is brought to a large and spacious field (see 8.9) of such dimensions that he thought of it as a world (see 8.20). Is the “wilderness” figurative or literal? If figurative, the Lord may be reviewing Lehi’s spiritual circumstances before his conversion and calling as a prophet. If literally, then Lehi would have been reminded of the place where they now dwelt along the banks of the river Laman in the valley of Lemuel, and the desolation through which they had passed before they encamped there.

8.5 In his first experience with open vision, Lehi had been guided and instructed by a man whose “luster was above that of the sun at noonday” (see 1.9). Are we to understand that in the vision of the Tree of Life that he is dealing with the same being? In Nephi’s account of the same vision, he testifies that the person with whom he conversed was the “Spirit of the Lord” meaning either the Holy Ghost or the spirit of the premortal Lord Jesus Christ. It seems likely that it was the Savior himself in both instances.

3 And behold, because of the thing which I have seen, I have reason to rejoice in the Lord because of Nephi and also of Sam; for I have reason to suppose that they, and also many of their seed, will be saved.

4 But behold, Laman and Lemuel, I fear exceedingly because of you; for behold, methought I saw in my dream, a dark and dreary wilderness.

{*¶*—1830}

*5 And it came to pass that I saw a man, and he was dressed in a white robe; and he came and stood before me.

1 Ne. 8:3–4, 12–18
CR88-A 69

* p. 19
1 Ne. 8:5–34
EM 3:1431

8.5.17–18—*white robe*—In other open visions white robes are the symbol of personal righteousness. In other instances, the clothing of the angel is reflective of the overall glorious presence of the messenger.

8.6 This has ever been the invitation of the Father and the Son. This notion of invitation is the essential meaning of the word “covenant”. Certainly the relationship between Lehi and the Lord is covenantal, whether of baptism, ordination to the Melchizedek Priesthood, or any number of other opportunities for aligning one’s self with the God of Heaven.

8.7 Whereas Lehi had begun his visionary journey in a dark and dreary wilderness, he now finds himself in a “waste” of the same hue. Are we dealing with simple synonyms here or is there a subtle difference between “wilderness” and “waste”? The English word “wilderness” derives from Germanic and Old English sources and constitutes a combination of “wild” (self-evident meaning), “deor” (OE for “beast”), and “ness” (a state or condition). Certainly the territory traveled by Lehi and his family from Jerusalem to the valley of Lemuel must be considered a “wilderness”, for thus it is called on several occasions. Additionally we are explicitly told that Laman and Lemuel proposed to leave the bound Nephi at the side of their road to the valley of Lemuel so that he might be killed and devoured by wild beasts (see 7.16). The word “waste” comes into English through Latin and Norman French, and while it may mean a “wild” place, just as the word “wilderness”, its primary semantic value is that of “desolation, unoccupied, empty, vain”, not only of people, but of animals and vegetation as well. The implication seems to be that if the family did not appreciate the solitude provided by a wilderness, there would be further opportunities to have their sensibilities tested. If our understanding of the geography of Lehi’s travels be correct, the little company would pass through an area known in Arabic as *Ar-Rub al-Khali*, or the Empty Quarter, a parcel of ground (250,000 square miles) that would have made the “wilderness” between Jerusalem and the valley of Lemuel seem like a paradise.

8.8 What may we say of the “darkness” through which Lehi was compelled to pass? May we not assume that at any given point that Lehi would not have known which way they were to travel or what they should do, if they had not received counsel from the Lord God of Israel? Point by point Lehi had received commandments regarding the gathering of provisions in preparation for his departure from Jerusalem, the retrieval of the Brass Plates, and inviting Ishamel and his family to Join them in their journey to the promised land. Sometimes the most inspired among them did not know exactly how they were going to accomplish the tasks that had been set before them (see 4.6). Within a short time, Lehi and those travelling with him would be guided by the instructions given by the Liahona. This compass-like instrument worked according to the united faith of all those within the company. Needless to say, the sons and daughters of Lehi and Ishamel travelled in spiritual “darkness” for a goodly portion of the time because of their devisiveness and rebellion. On the other hand, the “darkness” may also be a reference to the fact that during many times of the year they might have chosen to move from one campsite to another in the nighttime hours because of the excessive daytime temperatures.

8.8.34–35—*tender mercies*—Lehi had every expectation that he would be looked upon with kindness from the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He had sufficient personal experience and direct revelation to know that he would not seek God in vain (see 1.14)

6 And it came to pass that he spake unto me, and bade me follow him.

7 And it came to pass that as I followed him I beheld myself that I was in a dark and dreary waste.

8 And after I had traveled for the space of many hours in darkness, I began to pray unto the Lord that he would have mercy on me, according to the multitude of his tender mercies.

1 Ne. 8:8
CR87-O 102

{9—1830}

8.9 A the result of his fervent prayer, Lehi is led by the Spirit of the Lord to a large and spacious field, one that was like unto a world (see 8.20). One might pose the question as to what part of his journey is represented here. The land of Bountiful where they would build the ship that would take them to the promised land? Perhaps not, save for the expanse of the Indian Ocean which lay before them to the south, at which they were all astonished (see 17.5), which they called Irreantum. It is likely, however, that no matter how much the watery expanse contributed to their understanding of the distances involved in their journey, that the large and spacious field typified the promised land which he and his posterity had been given for an inheritance.

8.10 The witness that is borne here to Lehi and eventually to Nephi, is that eternal life for them and their families could not transpire in any other place other than the promised land. That is where the Tree of Life, for them, was located. As delightful as the land of Bountiful might be after many years in the wilderness, the real blessings could not and would not be obtained in the place where Nephi would be commanded to build the ship. Nephi could not be budged from his determination to make his way across the great waters because he understood the significance of the dream.

8.10.10—*tree*—Nephi will discern the Tree of Life to be the love of God by which eternal life is provided to all who come unto Christ. Jesus, of course, the Son of the living God, is represented by that Tree.

8.10.12—*fruit*—Nephi teaches his brethren that the fruit to be obtained from the tree of life is the greatest of all of the gifts of God (see 15.36). The greatest of all of the gifts of God, according to His own word, is eternal life.

8.10.18—*happy*—And that, eternally so.

8.11 When Nephi saw the Tree he observed that it was as beautiful, glorious and white in the same way that Lehi described the fruit. If we assume that the imagery involving white is an indication of righteousness and perfection (see 8.5.17–18), then the sublime depiction of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Tree is completely consistent. The fruit of the Tree of life is eternal life. Tasting of eternal life is, in part, a partaking of the joys of personal righteousness. We are eternal beings of light and truth, and that which is light and truth is pleasing to us. Eternal life is that life which God Himself lives, and therefore there is no happier man in all of the eternities.

8.11.24—*sweet*—Sweetness is not just of the taste buds, it is also descriptive of those things which pleasantly affects all of the senses. It also speaks of those things which are mild, soft, gentle, kind, and obliging.

8.12 The first impulse of any man who has gained true salvation for himself is to offer the opportunity to those who are the closest to him. There is no true happiness and joy in complete solitude; it is to be found in righteous unity with those whom we love. Faith in Christ ultimately leads to having hope for one's self, and from thence we are moved to have charity for others.

8.13 In loving anxiety for his family, Lehi looked about him in order to find his wife and sons, that they might rejoice in their salvation as he did. As Nephi would say later (see 15.27–30) Lehi was so preoccupied with inviting his family to partake of the fruit of the Tree that he did not notice the filthiness of the water in the river. The river ran through an impassable chasm, a defile that

9 And it came to pass after I had prayed unto the Lord I beheld a large and spacious field.

10 And it came to pass that I beheld a tree, whose fruit was desirable to make one happy.

{~~9~~—1830}

11 And it came to pass that I did go forth and partake of the fruit thereof; and I beheld that it was most sweet, above all that I ever before tasted. Yea, and I beheld that the fruit thereof was white, to exceed all the whiteness that I had ever seen.

12 And as I partook of the fruit thereof it filled my soul with exceedingly great joy; wherefore, I began to be desirous that my family should partake of it also; for I knew that it was desirable above all other fruit.

13 And as I cast my eyes round about, that perhaps I might discover my family also, I beheld a river of water; and it ran along, and it was near the tree of which I was

1 Ne. 8:10
EM 4:1487
CR85-O 47
1 Ne. 8:10–12
DNCTC 1:745
DNCTC 3:447
CR95-O 45
CR02-A 98
1 Ne. 8:10–35
CR99-O 90

1 Ne. 8:12
CR85-A 28

1 Ne. 8:13,32
EM 1:188

separated the wicked from the righteous, the great and spacious building from the Tree of Life. The river and the defile represent the depths of hell (see 12.16).

8.14 At the head of the river of filthy water was a fountain of filthy water which Lehi does not mention but Nephi does. The fountain of filthy waters was in precise opposition to the Tree of Life and together with the river constituted the barrier that prohibited the wicked from coming unto Christ. Sariah, Sam, and Nephi were on the cusp of a decision as they stood by the fountain of filthy waters. Apparently Lehi's wife and two younger sons had not yet espied their husband and father positioned beneath the Tree. As will be seen, Laman and Lemuel were also at the head of the river (see 8.17), but they would not listen to his voice or respond to his beckonings. Given their proclivity for the material things of the earth and their quickness to mockery, we might assume that they had already begun to make their way to the great and spacious building, a place that represented the pride and carnal security of the world.

8.14.29—*Sariah*—The wife of Lehi and the mother of the family that eventually inherited the land of promise in what is now known as the western hemisphere.

8.14.31—*Sam*—The third son of Lehi and Sariah who tended to follow the direction of his younger brother Nephi. He and his posterity were considered generally to be Nephites.

8.14.33—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

8.15 Lehi hailed the three members of his family, waving with his hands and crying out with a loud voice that they ought to make their way to where he was standing beneath the Tree. Lehi was a man of experience, and man filled with joy because of his faith in Jesus Christ. Because he was truly happy, he wished others to be so as well. In this he differed in nothing from God the eternal Father; to this extent he had partaken of eternal life, the sort of life that God Himself leads.

8.16 Nephi testified that he did not rebel against his father because he had fervently prayed that he might know the truth (see 2.26) and as a result his heart was softened by the power of the Spirit of God. Sam hearkened to the voice of his brother Nephi, and presumably obtained a witness of his father's word in a similar fashion. Sariah also came to a personal witness of her husband's visions and of the commandments which had been given him, even though it came not without some difficulty (see 5.1–9). By holding on to the word of God, they too managed to make their way through the mists of darkness to the Tree and partook of the fruit, candidates for exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom.

8.17 What true father ever fails to love any of his children? Laman and Lemuel had been rascals on many occasions, filled with doubt and mistrust, and yet Lehi continued to work with them. In his Dream he felt that it was still possible for his elder sons to obtain salvation and therefore he sought them out. That they did not hearken to his voice in this prophetic vision must have been

partaking the fruit.

14 And I looked to behold from whence it came; and I saw the head thereof a little way off; and at the head thereof I beheld your mother Sariah, and Sam, and Nephi; and they stood as if they knew not whither they should go.

{¶—1830}

15 And it came to pass that I beckoned unto them; and I also did say unto them with a loud voice that they should come unto me, and partake of the fruit, which was desirable above all other fruit.

{¶—1830}

16 And it came to pass that they did come unto me and partake of the fruit also.

17 And it came to pass that I was desirous that Laman and Lemuel should come and partake of the fruit also; wherefore, I cast mine eyes towards the head of the river,

1 Ne. 8:17–18
CR99-O 8

heartbreaking for Lehi. In fact, he feared exceedingly for them (see 8.4), with a fear only a helpless father can experience.

8.17.11—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

8.17.13—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

8.18 What a terrible revelation! That for all that he and the other members of his family might do, Laman and Lemuel would not partake of eternal life in the Celestial Kingdom. They would continue to choose rebellion over righteousness. What does one do under these circumstances? One does what God the Father has done from eternity to eternity: provide one’s rebellious children with as many opportunities to receive the greatest degree of happiness that they are willing to accept.

8.19 The rod of iron in the Dream served two purposes. The first was to lead those who so desired to a place beneath the Tree of Life where they might freely partake of the most desirable fruit, The second was to help guard against any of those upon the path from inadvertently falling into the chasm and the river of filthy water, particularly while traveling through the mists of darkness. Nephi comes to understand that the rod represents the word of God, by which men come unto Christ and eternal life (see 11.25), and subsequently teaches his elder brothers the same (see 15.23–25).

8.20 The strait and narrow path is such because it is defined by the multitudes who come unto Christ by grasping hold of the iron rod. That is to say, the path is strait because the rod of iron leads in a direct line from the world to the Tree of Life.

8.20.6—*strait*—The confusion between the homophones “strait” and “straight” is endemic in the English-speaking world. In the 1829 American Dictionary of the English Language, Noah Webster mistakenly asserts that the spellings are merely variants of the same word. He suggested that “It is customary to write “*straight*”, for direct or right, and “*strait*” for narrow, but this is a practice wholly arbitrary, both being the same word.” Modern historical linguists and lexicographers have concluded that “strait” derives from a Latin root which also has provided us words like “constrict” and “strain”. It means “to bind tight, or press together”. The Straits of Magellan and the Straits of Gibraltar are so named for that reason. Some confusion was initiated during the Middle English period of the English language (c. AD 1300) when the orthographic conventions of the time caused several variants spellings of “strait” including “straight”. The modern word spelled “straight” derives from the Germanic foundations of the English language and means “to stretch”. Thus, a football player in order to “straight-arm” a fellow player has to “stretch out” his hand to deflect his opponent. Also the shortest distance between two points is a “stretched line”, one with such tension that there is no deviation in the direct line. Modern readers of the Book of Mormon are sometimes understandably confused as to what is meant by the “strait and narrow path”: is it “really, really narrow” or is it “direct and narrow”? Perhaps there is little to be

that perhaps I might see them.

{*9—1830*}

18 And it came to pass that I saw them, but they would not come unto me and partake of the fruit.

19 And I beheld a rod of iron, and it extended along the bank of the river, and led to the tree by which I stood.

20 And I also beheld a strait and narrow path, which came along by the rod of iron, even to the tree by which I stood; and it also led by the head of the fountain, unto a large and spacious field, as if it had been a world.

1 Ne. 8:19
EM 3:1429
CR92-O 4
1 Ne. 8:19–20
EM 3:1419
1 Ne. 8:19–28
CR89-A 5
1 Ne. 8:19,30
CR92-A 39
1 Ne. 8:20–21
CR89-O 92
1 Ne. 8:20,27, 33
CR86-A 6

gained by choosing one over the other.

8.21 How many millions of people would derive from the little company who, led by God, came to dwell in the Americas? Multitudes of his posterity would “run together” that they might proceed upon the strait and narrow path and arrive at the Tree of Life to partake of the fruit; other multitudes would “run together” toward the great and spacious building and fall into grievous apostasy.

8.21.5—*concourses*—The English word “concourses” derives from Latin roots which mean to “run together” and those same roots provide English with words like “concur”. It carries with it the notion of assemblage.

8.21.12–13—*pressing forward*—This is a concerted effort to obtain the path.

8.22 Uncountable multitudes of Lehi’s posterity would desire with all of their hearts to do that which was right, would be willing to dedicate their lives to the fullness of the Gospel of Christ. Many of those would grasp the rod of iron with both hands and pull themselves along to eternal life and safety beneath the Tree. Others, neglecting to hold fast to the rod, would be overcome by the temptations of the devil.

8.23 Those upon the path had made a substantive choice. They knew that the Tree was beautiful and good. They had a great desire to partake of the fruit of the Tree. Yet in their impatience and self-confidence, they saw no need in the brightness of the clear day to grasp the iron rod. There was no need, in their estimation, because they could clearly see their goal. So therefore when the mists came, they were caught unawares and could not find the rod, that they might continue on their direct journey to the Tree of Life. Nephi is later taught that the mists are the temptations of Satan who through deception would lead the less diligent away from the strait and narrow path to the broad road of destruction (see 12.17). In explaining the Dream to his brothers, Nephi equates holding on to the rod of iron with keeping the commandments (see 15.24–25). For the purposes of the imagery, we might suppose that the mists are produced by the river of filthy waters which ran nearby.

8.24 The Greek word which has been borrowed into English as “disciple” derives from roots which literally mean to “grasp or seize with both hands”. Those who would obtain to eternal life must needs hold on to the rod of iron with both hands, “clinging” to the rod, pulling themselves forward through the mists of darkness hand over hand until they reach the Tree and partake of the fruit thereof. One cannot hope to achieve success by merely looking at the rod intently from time to time, or by merely touching it with a finger occasionally.

8.25 It is almost impossible to think of a greater sorrow that can come into the heart of a father than to know that some of his children would get this close to exaltation and then be ashamed to endure to the end. The sorrow is intensified when one realizes that the falling way has happened because of other children who had rejected the approach to the Tree altogether. Thus far in Lehi’s Dream it is possible to see a parallel between the Vision of the Tree of Life and the Lord’s parable of the Sower (see *MT-C 13.18–23*). Those who fail to attain the path toward the Tree at all are like unto the wayside where the seed

21 And I saw numberless concourses of people, many of whom were pressing forward, that they might obtain the path which led unto the tree by which I stood.

* p. 20

{*¶*—1830}

22 And it came to pass that they did come forth, and commence in the path which led to the tree.

23 And it came to pass that there arose a mist of darkness; yea, even an exceedingly great mist of darkness, insomuch that they who had commenced in the path did lose their way, that they wandered off and were lost.

1 Ne. 8:23
CR89-A 101
CR92-A 91
1 Ne. 8:23–32
CR92-A 91
1 Ne. 8:23–24
DNTPC 3:362

{*¶*—1830}

24 And it came to pass that I beheld others pressing forward, and they came forth and caught hold of the end of the rod of iron; and they did press forward through the mist of darkness, clinging to the rod of iron, even until they did come forth and partake of the fruit of the tree.

1 Ne. 8:24
CR01-O 32
1 Ne. 8:24–28
CR95-O 45

25 And after they had partaken of the fruit of the tree they did cast their eyes about as if they were ashamed.

is devoured by the birds before it can germinate. Those who are lost through the mists of darkness are like unto the thorny soil which was overshadowed; the seed germinated but was overwhelmed by the shadows. Those who were lost having once partaken of the fruit are similar to the soil with hidden stones beneath the surface which allows the seed to begin its growth, but causes withering once persecutions begin.

8.26 Between the great and spacious building and the Tree of Life is the river of filthy water, the depths of hell which separate the wicked from the righteous. The wicked are such, in part, because they are attracted by the vanity of the world, the pride in material things. Even though we are not told precisely that Laman and Lemuel made their way to the building, it would seem consistent with their conduct throughout their lives that this would have been their inclination. They have no hesitancy in making fun of the righteous, mocking those who were on the Lord's errand, and hindering the efforts of the humble and meek to do that which was essential for the salvation of their brethren. Nephi is told that the building and those who dwelt therein represented the pride of the world, the wisdom thereof, and the viciousness of a covenant people who have fallen into apostasy (see 11.35 and 12.18). One immediately thinks of wicked men like King Noah whose rejection of true principles manifested itself in part by the luxurious edifices which he forced his people to build for him.

8.27 Fine clothing as a marker of those who had fallen from grace appears frequently in the scriptures. Jacob, the brother of Nephi, attacks this problem among his people head on in his address to them at the temple in the land of Nephi (see *JA-C 2.13*). Several others among the Nephites will take their people to task for the same reason. The motivation for wearing costly apparel seems to be connected with a desire to mock those who are not in a position to likewise clothe themselves. Mockery, however, is no substitute for happiness and ultimately those who engage in it will suffer a complete and utter destruction as their unfounded pride collapses around their ears.

8.28 The fruit of the Tree of Life was glorious to behold and delicious to the taste, no sweeter fruit could be obtained anywhere. How could anyone, while partaking of that fruit, be distracted by an erstwhile mocker? Were they blind to the beauty and glory of the Tree? Had they lost their sense of taste or had they never acquired that capacity in their progression? What made them susceptible to the taunts of the people in the great and spacious building? What made them ashamed? What could the people in the building possibly have said that would embarrass those who had pressed their way to the Tree? Was it not, as is suggested in the comparison with the parable of the Sower, that these were people who suddenly were aware that they were not worthy to be partaking of the fruit, that their hearts were filled with hidden sins, for the which there had been no repentance. Shamefacedness comes with guilt; guilt is the result of a lack of forgiveness.

8.28.25–26—*forbidden paths*—The most wretched of sinners are those who, once having known of the goodness of God, turn away there from. Inevitably these lost souls will turn to a brand of sinning which never would have occurred to them before their introduction to the fullness of the Gospel of Christ.

8.29 Notwithstanding the little details that may have escaped Lehi's attention (see 8.14), the Vision of the Tree of Life was considerably more expansive than

26 And I also cast my eyes round about, and beheld, on the other side of the river of water, a great and spacious building; and it stood as it were in the air, high above the earth.

27 And it was filled with people, both old and young, both male and female; and their manner of dress was exceedingly fine; and they were in the attitude of mocking and pointing their fingers towards those who had come at and were partaking of the fruit.

28 And after they had tasted of the fruit they were ashamed, because of those that were scoffing at them; and they fell away into forbidden paths and were lost.

{*¶—1830*}

29 And now I, Nephi, do not speak all the words of my father.

1 Ne. 8:26
 DNTC 2:409
 CR87-A 88
 CR88-A 8
 CR93-A 97
 1 Ne. 8:26–27
 CR87-O 49
 1 Ne. 8:26–28
 CR00-O 48
 1 Ne. 8:26–28, 33
 CR96-A 94
 1 Ne. 8:26,31
 CR99-O 7
 1 Ne. 8:26,33
 CR89-A 6
 1 Ne. 8:27–28
 EM 1:57
 CR93-A 97
 1 Ne. 8:27,33
 CR93-O 26

 1 Ne. 8:28
 CR82-O 98
 CR89-O 92
 CR92-A 91

what Nephi chose to include in his narrative. No doubt there would be an exacting account recorded on the Large Plates of Nephi upon which Nephi engraved the complete narrative of his father's history (see 1.16–17). Some of the more substantive material is certainly covered in Nephi's own experience with the Spirit of the Lord as the Vision of the Tree of Life is presented to him as well.

8.29.4—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

8.30 Lehi had seen many of his own posterity completely reject his invitation to join him at the foot of the Tree. Instead these determined rebels entered into the great and spacious building where they mocked and condemned those upon the path and insulted those who had partaken of the fruit. He had watched others lose their way in the mists of darkness, and still others wander into forbidden paths because of their shortcomings and the chiding of the people in the building. These were his children, a large number of his posterity engendered on the face of the promised land. These repeated failures must have been hard to watch. Yet on the other hand, this faithful patriarch witnessed a goodly number of his children who obtained that most desirable of the gifts of God through obedience to the word of God. These continued in righteousness, enduring to the end of their lives having found salvation and exaltation.

8.31 One wonders why the multitudes who would not enter into the strait and narrow path were "feeling" their way towards the great and spacious building. Were they blind in some fashion? Were they seeking to gratify their emotions, their passions, their appetites?

8.32 Did these people who drowned in the depths of the fountain of filthy waters inadvertently fall into the waters? Were they precipitated into the river by stumbling over the edge of the chasm? Could they not see where they were going? Did they not perceive the dangers?

8.32.25–26—*strange roads*—Are these roads to be equated with the "forbidden paths" into which the ashamed saints entered? Are the "strange roads" those taken instead of the "strait and narrow path" when the mists of darkness arose? Should we understand "strange" in the same sense that the ancient Hebrews understood it? That is to say, where once the multitudes had been part of a covenant people, they had become like the Gentiles in their daily walk and talk?

8.33 As tenderly as we feel about the great prophet Lehi it is difficult for us to imagine that his own posterity would have him in derision. Yet our own experiences in life demonstrate that this is a common practice of those who have chosen to forsake the true faith of their ancestors and indulge themselves in the ways of a fallen world. The fact of the matter is that the righteous frequently have disobedient children.

8.33.11–12—*strange building*—This represents the pride of the non-covenant world, the Gentile mentality, the city of Babylon, the world in all of its misguided self-esteem.

30 But, to be short in writing, behold, he saw other multitudes pressing forward; and they came and caught hold of the end of the rod of iron; and they did press their way forward, continually holding fast to the rod of iron, until they came forth and fell down and partook of the fruit of the tree.

31 And he also saw other multitudes feeling their way towards that great and spacious building.

{¶—1830}

32 And it came to pass that many were drowned in the depths of the fountain; and many were lost from his view, wandering in strange roads.

33 And great was the multitude that did enter into that strange building. And after they did enter into that building they did point the finger of scorn at me and those that were partaking of the fruit also; but we heeded them not.

1 Ne. 8:30
EM 4:1487
CR92-O 37
CR01-O 86
CR02-A 42
1 Ne. 8:31
EM 3:1429

1 Ne. 8:33
CR01-A 76

8.34 Those who depend on the honors of men, the accolades of a fallen world, will ultimately be disappointed in all things that they hoped to have make them happy. The great and spacious building was doomed to destruction from the very beginning.

8.35 Lehi testified to his entire family that Laman and Lemuel would not enter into the path nor touch the rod of iron, much less walk to the Tree and partake of the fruit of eternal life. This is as distressing an observation as any tender parent could have of their children.

8.35.2—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

8.35.4—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

8.36 Lehi had begun his commentary on the Vision of the Tree of Life with precisely the same conclusion; he feared exceedingly for Laman and Lemuel (see 8.4). Because of their murderous rebellions, the two elder brothers would not inherit eternal life. They would not return to the presence of God and be exalted in the Kingdom prepared for the righteous. In a more temporal sense, because: Laman and Lemuel were unwilling to call upon God for light and truth, they would be left unto themselves. Without the Spirit of God moving within them, they would become more and more alienated from the righteous, creating more and more bitterness of mind and heart, until they were devoid of any charity for their fellow men.

8.37 For his part, Lehi could not give up on his two rebellious sons. If there were any way that they might be reclaimed, he was willing to endeavor to pursue a course that would bring all of his children into a reconciliation with the God of Heaven. This attitude of charity and compassion on the part of those who were counted among the righteous is repeated time and again within the pages of the Book of Mormon. Jacob records such attempts (see *JA-C 7.24*) as does Enos (see *EN-C 1.20*). The sons of Mosiah, the sons of Helaman, Mormon, and Moroni are motivated by this same desire, sometimes in the face of malignant resistance. Lehi could not relent; he could not abandon any of his children, even when he knew that it would be a bootless exercise in futility.

8.38 At the heart of Lehi’s message to his two older sons was the importance of keeping the commandments. In the Dream, the rod of iron, or the word of God, was that which led to the Tree of Life. Nephi would teach Laman and Lemuel the same concept when they came to him for instruction (see 15.23–25). By taking hold of the rod of iron, through the act of keeping the commandments of God, they would avoid the fountain and river of filthy waters, be able to pass through the mists of darkness, and come to the Tree where they might find eternal happiness. Note that the last verse of Chapter 8 was originally part of the paragraph which contains the beginning of Chapter 9.

34 These are the words of my father: For as many as heeded them, had fallen away.

35 And Laman and Lemuel partook not of the fruit, said my father.

{*¶*—1830}

36 And it came to pass after my father had spoken all the *words of his dream or vision, which were many, he said unto us, because of these things which he saw in a vision, he exceedingly feared for Laman and Lemuel; yea, he feared lest they should be cast off from the presence of the Lord.

37 And he did exhort them then with all the feeling of a tender parent, that they would hearken to his words, that perhaps the Lord would be merciful to them, and not cast them off; yea, my father did preach unto them.

{*¶*—1830}

38 And after he had preached unto them, and also prophesied unto them of many things, he bade them to keep the commandments of the Lord; and he did cease speaking unto them.

1 Ne. 8:35
CR99-O 8

1 Ne. 8:36–37
EM 2:801
* p. 21

1 Ne. 8:37
EM 4:1578
CR85-O 48
CR90-O 8
CR96-O 28, 111
CR97-O 39
CR99-O 7
1 Ne. 8:37–38
CR85-O 48

{Chapter II, continued}
(Chapter 9)

9.1 The Vision of the Tree of Life embraced all of the senses and was as real as could be imagined. Lehi beheld with his own eyes all of the elements which pertained to the interpretation of the dream. Nephi does not say whether or not his father held conversation with the man who led him along the way toward the tree, but he certainly heard those who were mocking him and his posterity as they struggled to make their way to the fruit of eternal life. Lehi tastes and smells the fruit of the Tree and commented on it. He certainly felt the rod of iron as he made his way along the path. The vision or dream was a rich experience indeed. Some scholars have suggested that Nephi's synopsis of his father's preserved record probably ends here (see 1.16–17), but it seems likely that Nephi consulted and redacted his father's writings until the point in his narrative when Lehi passed away (see 2 *NE-C 1.0*). The full account of Lehi's record may be found on the Large Plates of Nephi.

9.1.23—*Lemuel*—A valley named after the second son of Lehi and Sariah. He was for the most part of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

9.1.36–37—*these plates*—In reference to the Small Plates of Nephi. One might argue that Lehi's teachings regarding the Tree of Life would certainly be worth while to put on the Small Plates, but we may assume that Nephi considered his own experience with the Vision would satisfy any theological lack brought about by the terseness of his father's account.

9.2 We ought not to become agitated over two different sets of writing plates which bear the name of Nephi. The Large Plates of Nephi could more easily be referred to as the Large Plates of the Nephites, inasmuch as the people who followed the teachings of this son of Lehi chose to call themselves such, after the founder of their nation. The Large Plates continued for nearly one thousand years, volume after volume being fabricated so that the chroniclers might preserve an accurate history of their people. The Small Plates were made by the hand of Nephi and when the last plate was filled with writing there were no additional plates made, with the possible exception of the one upon which Mormon inscribed his last farewell.

9.2.3—*as*—That is to say, inasmuch as he had mentioned the Small Plates he thought it meet to reiterate the difference between the two sets, the Large and the Small Plates.

9.2.21–22—*full account*—The full account of Lehi and his family could be found on the Large Plates of Nephi, which record was complete in every detail. Therefore, it was possible to condense Nephi's accounts and the accounts of his father on the Small Plates.

9.2.32—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

9.3 Strictly speaking, the account of the ministry of Nephi's people does continue on the Small Plates for seven generations. Of the nine contemporary authors who contributed to the narrative, Nephi, Jacob, Enos, and Jarom address the spiritual issues facing their people, together with their labors to restore the Lamanites to righteousness. Omni, Amaron, Chemish and Abina-

1 AND all these things did my father see, and hear, and speak, as he dwelt in a tent, in the valley of Lemuel, and also a great many more things, which cannot be written upon these plates.

2 And now, as I have spoken concerning these plates, behold they are not the plates upon which I make a full account of the history of my people; for the plates upon which I make a full account of my people I have given the name of Nephi; wherefore, they are called the plates of Nephi, after mine own name; and these plates also are called the plates of Nephi.

{¶—1830}

3 Nevertheless, I have received a commandment of the Lord that I should make these plates, for the special purpose that there should be an account engraven of the minis-

1 Ne. 9
AF 263, 295
MD 208, 326
EM 1:142, 199
EM 2:855
1 Ne. 9:1–6
EM 2:845

1 Ne. 9:2,4
EM 1:199

1 Ne. 9:3
AF 264
CR86-A 75
1 Ne. 9:3,5
EM 2:589

dom do little to add to the overall spiritual atmosphere of their people. Amaleki provides a breath of fresh air at the end of the Small Plates, bearing his testimony of the Christ and the value of keeping the commandments of God. We in this dispensation can easily perceive one of the more obvious reasons for the production of the Small Plates, particularly in light of the loss of the manuscript of the Book of Lehi, Mormon's account of Lehi and Nephi as derived from the Large Plates of Nephi.

9.4 It appears that Nephi is belaboring the distinction between the Large and Small Plates of Nephi, but given the confusion that is sometimes generated in the minds of the readers of the Book of Mormon, we might allow that Nephi takes the time and space wisely. In the text of the Book of Mormon from 1 Nephi to the Words of Mormon, "these plates" almost invariably refer to the Small Plates of Nephi; "other plates" almost always refers to the Large Plates of Nephi. There are some notable exceptions to that general rule.

9.5 Nephi may have thought that the manufacturing of the second set of Plates was redundant, but he was obedient, notwithstanding any doubts he may have had in the process. How grateful we should feel because of his obedience. It is intriguing to note that Mormon physically appended the Small Plates of Nephi to his own set of plates because he was moved upon by the Spirit of the Lord to do so (see *WM-C 1.3-7*).

9.6 Theologians are sometimes loath to attribute to the God of Heaven a perfect view of all things, past, present, and future. This, of course, reveals a lack of faith caused by excessive intellectualism. In order for deity to provide for problems yet unexpressed in time, God's awareness must needs be perfect. Inadvertent sins do not surprise Him; allowances and provisions have been made throughout all time, even though the provisions may have been realized many hundreds or thousands of years before they were required. So it is with the creation of the Small Plates of Nephi; that provision may yet adequately supply a future need which mortal man in his finite wisdom cannot foresee.

9.6.42—*Amen*—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as "Amen" derives from roots which mean "true". This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

10.1 Nephi had begun his narration with a review of his father's ministry in Jerusalem, together with an account of the various commandments which Lehi had received from God in reference to the Brass Plates and the family of Ishmael. Although Nephi will continue to draw upon the material recorded in his father's journal, for the most part he refers to his own history of the time.

10.1.4—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

try of my people.

4 Upon the other plates should be engraven an account of the reign of the kings, and the wars and contentions of my people; wherefore these plates are for the more part of the ministry; and the other plates are for the more part of the reign of the kings and the wars and contentions of my people.

5 Wherefore, the Lord hath commanded me to make these plates for a wise purpose in him, which purpose I know not.

6 But the Lord knoweth all things from the beginning; wherefore, he prepareth a way to accomplish all his works among the children of men; for behold, he hath all power unto the fulfilling of all his words. And thus it is. Amen.

{Chapter III} (Chapter 10)

{¶—1830}

1 AND now I, Nephi, proceed to give an account upon these plates of my proceedings, and my reign and ministry; wherefore, to proceed with mine account, I must speak somewhat of the things of my father, and also of my brethren.

1 Ne. 9:4
CR86-A 74

1 Ne. 9:5
AF 266

1 Ne. 9:6
AF 43
MD 544
CR81-O 12
CR83-A 11
CR87-A 105
CR87-O 4, 102
1 Ne. 9:9
MLM 64

1 Ne. 10
MD 208, 490
EM 1:142, 146
EM 2:748, 827,
855

10.1.11–12—*these plates*—Meaning, of course, the Small Plates of Nephi.

10.1.18—*reign*—When Nephi and his family separated from those who were determined to follow his elder brothers, they went up into a land which they called the land of Nephi. In short order, the Nephites, as they were wont to call themselves, petitioned Nephi that he might be their king (see *2 NE-C 5.18–19*). Though he was loath to do so, he did as they wished. Since the Small Plates were devised several years after the beginning of the kingdom, Nephi refers to that event as if it had already transpired. Nephi, therefore, at this point in the historical narrative, is not yet a king.

10.1.20—*ministry*—Nephi is both a priest and a king

10.2 The Vision of the Tree of Life had been concerned primarily with the posterity of father Lehi. While one could make an application that Dream to other portions of the House of Israel, it is probably not the direct source for that which Lehi teaches his sons. One might ask as to what may have motivated Lehi's discourse on the fate of the Jews. Certainly the teachings of Jeremiah and many of the other ancient prophets had addressed this issue and inasmuch as Lehi had access to their writings through the Brass Plates we might conclude that they may have provided his resource. Of course, Lehi may have had his own revelations on the matter. Once the company arrived in the promised land, Lehi testified to his posterity that Jerusalem had, by that time, been destroyed by the Babylonians (see *2 NE-C 1.4*).

10.2.35—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

10.3 Clearly by this time, Lehi had become familiar with the allegory of Zenos. The Babylonian Captivity and the return of the Jews seventy years later would be immediately perceived as an aspect of Zenos' prophecy.

10.3.6—*destroyed*—This destruction of Jerusalem transpired eleven years after Lehi and his family left the land of their inheritance, in 591 BC.

10.3.11—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, "flowing peace" or "established in peace". The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, "established in peace" is by definition, the City of the great King.

10.3.19—*Babylon*—A great nation founded in the Mesopotamian valley closely associated with the Chaldean empire. It had risen to some economic importance by the time of the fall of Jericho to the Israelites under Joshua. The Babylonians would eventually become a world power, overrunning the whole of the Middle East. The threat of the Babylonian captivity would bring about the departure of several groups from the land of Israel, the most prominent in scripture being Lehi and his family, together with the associates of Mulek who eventually settled the land of Zarahemla. Babylon has become the metaphorical representation of materialism in the world of men.

10.3.24–25—*due time*—Jeremiah had testified that the return from captivity would take place seventy years after the destruction of the Temple and the city. If we choose to be chronologically absolute, that return would have commenced about 520 BC. Some scholars have placed the

{*9—1830*}

*2 For behold, it came to pass after my father had made an end of speaking the words of his dream, and also of exhorting them to all diligence, he spake unto them concerning the Jews—

* p. 22
1 Ne. 10:2–4
EM 2:729

3 That after they should be destroyed, even that great city Jerusalem, and many be carried away captive into Babylon, according to the own due time of the Lord, they should return again, yea, even be brought back out of captivity; and after they should be brought back out of captivity they should possess again the land of their inheritance.

1 Ne. 10:3
AF 327
1 Ne. 10:3–11
AF 83

date of the return considerably earlier. Needless to say the academic chronology of the era is somewhat muddled.

10.4 Through modern revelation we know that Jesus of Nazareth was born in Bethlehem on the sixth of April 1 BC. The departure of Lehi and his family from Judea took place, therefore, during the year 600 BC. This year is also marked as the first year of the reign of King Zedekiah (see 1.4). It is during the eleventh year of the reign of this same king (591 BC) that the city of Jerusalem is destroyed and the survivors carried away into Babylon. The Messiah will be identified by his most familiar name “Jesus Christ” in Nephi’s later teachings (see 2 *NE-C 25.19*).

10.4.13—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

10.4.15—*prophet*—The mark of a true prophet is that he always testifies of the coming of the Messiah. Did Jesus ever testify of himself? All scholarly opinions to the contrary aside, of course he did.

10.4.24—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

10.4.27—*Messiah*—A Hebrew word meaning the “Anointed One”. Translated into Greek, this phrase becomes, in its anglicized form, “Christ”.

10.4.33—*Savior*—The Hebrew name which most closely represents the sense of “Savior” is “Joshua”. The primary Greek form of “Joshua” is “Jesus”.

10.5 From the days of Adam and Eve down to our own day, hundreds of millions of prophets have raised their voices in honor of the Son of God, of his life and ministry, of his effective victory over death and hell, and of his personal love for all of those who have come forth from the Father.

10.5.7—*prophets*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

10.5.19—*Messiah*—A Hebrew word meaning the “Anointed One”. Translated into Greek, this phrase becomes, in its anglicized form, “Christ”.

10.5.27—*Redeemer*—The English word “Redeemer” derives from roots which mean to “obtain, purchase, ransom”.

10.6 The coming of the Lord Jesus Christ had been anticipated for millennia before his birth. Signs and tokens of various kinds were instituted that the faithful might recognize him when the time came. Self-awareness, knowing that all was not well in the world, would cause men to look to their God for peace of mind and heart and they would find it only as they exercised faith in the Son of God.

10.6.7—*lost*—As Jacob would later teach his family (see 2 *NE-C 9.8–9*), were it not for the atoning sacrifice and the Savior’s victory over death, we must ultimately have become like Satan, filled with anger, remorse, and bitterness. He is Perdition, and we would have become his sons.

{9—1830}

4 Yea, even six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem, a prophet would the Lord God raise up among the Jews—even a Messiah, or, in other words, a Savior of the world.

5 And he also spake concerning the prophets, how great a number had testified of these things, concerning this Messiah, of whom he had spoken, or this Redeemer of the world.

6 Wherefore, all mankind were in a lost and in a fallen state, and ever would be save they should rely on this Redeemer.

1 Ne. 10:4
DNTC 1:91
JC 36, 103
PM 310, 312,
457
EM 1:170
EM 2:727, 731,
749
EM 3:1163,
1163, 1165
CR99-A 104
1 Ne. 10:4–5
AF 252
PM 77, 237
1 Ne. 10:4–10
MA 40
1 Ne. 10:4–11
JC 51
EM 3:1161
1 Ne. 10:4–17
AF 94
MD 489
EM 2:892
CR93-A 34
1 Ne. 10:4–6, 11
EM 2:894

1 Ne. 10:5–10
MD 604

1 Ne. 10:6
AF 107
EM 2:776
CR87-O 102

10.6.11—*fallen*—When the earth was created, all things therein were pronounced “very good” by the Creator. While it was not a perfected and exalted Celestial sphere, it was a Terrestrial world, beautiful, without death and disease. When Adam and Eve partook of the forbidden fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, they subjected themselves to death. In so doing they “fell” literally, from a terrestrial state to a telestial one. This telestial world is the one in which we presently dwell, and it will continue until the earth is restored to its paradisiacal glory.

10.6.20—*rely*—There is no other name given under heaven whereby man can be saved. Jesus Christ is the Anointed One, the Son of God, the Savior and Redeemer of all. All other aides and helps are but echoes and foreshadowings of him.

10.6.23—*Redeemer*—The English word “Redeemer” derives from roots which mean to “obtain, purchase, ransom”.

10.7 As the prophet Elijah had been a literal runner before the chariot of King Ahab, so also John the Baptist was chosen to prepare the people of Israel for the coming of the mortal Messiah. John the Baptist was filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost and testified faithfully throughout all of his ministry that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the Lamb of God slain before the foundations of the earth were laid.

10.7.7—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah. In this instance Lehi is speaking of John the Baptist.

10.7.13—*Messiah*—A Hebrew word meaning the “Anointed One”. Translated into Greek, this phrase becomes, in its anglicized form, “Christ”.

10.8 There are those who would criticize the Prophet Joseph Smith in cases like this verse, that he did no more than plagiarize from the Bible. But when one examines the phrasings and their origins in the New Testament, one is forced to confess that this is no way to copy another’s text. Clearly Lehi saw in vision the ministry of John the Baptist and committed his observations to writing, which were subsequently edited by his son Nephi. All of the various elements, the things that were reported said by John, are to be found collectively in the writings of the evangelists. The similarity between content of what they wrote and that which Lehi saw should not surprise us in any fashion. During the translation process, however, the Lord gave to Joseph the wording of the various King James translations of the four Gospels as the text that should be printed in the Book of Mormon. This literary pastiche is a technique which could not be used by a mortal attempting to produce a text of over 500 pages in less than three months.

10.8.12—*Prepare*—The initial part of this verse is a citation from the fortieth chapter of Isaiah which is later incorporated into the Gospels.

10.8.20—*make*—The synoptic evangelists reword the prophecy of Isaiah in an idiosyncratic way (see *MT-C 3.4*, *MK-C 1.3*, and *LK-C 3.4*).

10.8.26—*standeth*—This phrasing is unique to the Gospel of John (see *JN-C 1.26*).

10.8.35—*he*—The phrase is unique to the Gospel of Matthew (see *MT-C 3.11*).

10.8.40—*whose*—This wording is unique to the Gospel of John (see *JN-C 1.27*).

{*¶*—1830}

7 And he spake also concerning a prophet who should come before the Messiah, to prepare the way of the Lord—

8 Yea, even he should go forth and cry in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight; for there standeth one among you whom ye know not; and he is mightier than I, whose shoe’s latchet I am not worthy to unloose. And much spake my father concerning this thing.

{*¶*—1830}

1 Ne. 10:7–8
DNTC 1:116
PM 482
1 Ne. 10:7–10
AF 131
MD 291, 393,
490
DNTC 1:116
DS 3:4
EM 1:93
EM 2:756
EM 3:1163

1 Ne. 10:8–10
EM 2:731
1 Ne. 10:8
EM 2:749

10.9 Baptism by immersion is primarily performed for two reasons. The first and foremost is for the remission of sins. The ordinance represents a rebirth of the faithful, in imitation of the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. That resurrection is the outward token of the atoning sacrifice for the sins of mankind. The second reason for baptism is for membership in the Church of Jesus Christ. There are instances when the faithful have been baptized for the remission of sins, but not for membership in the Church of Christ. After the organization of the Church in this and other dispensations, converts to the Church and Kingdom of God have been baptized but once for both purposes.

10.9.9—*Bethabara*—A great deal of unnecessary prattling has gone on regarding the name of the place where John baptized those who came to him in repentance. Some scholars have pointed out that many manuscripts of the New Testament record the place name as “Bethany”. Whether or not there was such a location east of the River Jordan is not known, but the confusion of that erstwhile city with the one located just east of the Mount of Olives has caused many to err grievously regarding the nature of the ordinance of baptism itself. There is presently no river in which a person might be baptized near the village where Mary and Martha made their abode. Textualists who manage to distinguish the eastern slope of Olivet from the east bank of the Jordan assume that since most of the manuscripts in our possession have the name “Bethany” rather than “Bethabara” that “Bethany” must be the correct name. This does not necessarily follow, particularly if the mistake had been perpetuated for generations by exacting scribes. Historians assert that the first significant change from “Bethabara” to “Bethany” transpired in the days of Origin (c. AD 185–254). It is clear from records far more reliable and far more ancient than Origin and his contemporaries that “Bethabara” is the place where John the Baptist labored. Lehi clearly states that John would baptize in Bethabara, 600 years before those baptisms were performed. Eminent linguists have equated the ford of Bethbarah mentioned in the book of Judges with its obvious cognate here.

10.9.10–11—*beyond Jordan*—Most likely in the province of Perea east of the River Jordan, all arguments to the contrary notwithstanding (see *MT-C 4.25.22–23* and *MK-C 3.8.9–10*). A case might be made for a location north of Perea in the province of Decapolis, near the southern reaches of the Sea of Galilee (see *JN-C 1.41–44*).

10.9.27—*Messiah*—A Hebrew word meaning the “Anointed One”. Translated into Greek, this phrase becomes, in its anglicized form, “Christ”.

10.10 Jesus declared that there was no greater prophet born of woman than John the Baptist (see *MT-C 11.7–11*). One of the reasons given for that entitlement is the fact that John was permitted to fulfill all righteousness by baptizing the Son of God. John the Baptist never wavered in any fashion regarding his testimony of Jesus as the Christ (see *JN-C 1.29–34* and *LK-C 7.24–30*), the cynicism of scholars notwithstanding.

10.10.7—*Messiah*—A Hebrew word meaning the “Anointed One”. Translated into Greek, this phrase becomes, in its anglicized form, “Christ”.

10.10.21–23—*Lamb of God*—For thousands of years the children of men had offered up the firstlings of their flocks and herds unto the Most High in similitude of the sacrifice which God Himself would make in the Meridian of Time. Remission of sin can only be accomplished when the debts incurred by the sinner have been satisfied. Reconcili-

9 And my father said he should baptize in Bethabara, beyond Jordan; and he also said he should baptize with water; even that he should baptize the Messiah with water.

10 And after he had baptized the Messiah with water, he should behold and bear record that he had baptized the Lamb of God, who should take away the sins of the world.

1 Ne. 10:9
DNTC 1:131
1 Ne. 10:9–10
PM 482

1 Ne. 10:10
JC 46
PM 381
EM 2:749
EM 4:1569

ation between man and God came when the demands of Justice were fulfilled by Mercy. Jesus suffered body, mind, and spirit for and in behalf of all those who would call upon his name, exercising faith and repenting of their wickedness, and by submitting themselves to the saving ordinances of the Gospel of Christ. Thus, all mankind may be redeemed, even as many as will. The transgression of Adam and Eve also is accounted for as Jesus submitted himself to the requirements of the Fall, allowing his body to descend into the tomb. On the third day he arose from the dead, having gained the victory over both death and hell.

10.11 To what extent did Lehi teach his family regarding the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ? Was it merely a travelogue indicating how that sublime set of divine principles would be disseminated throughout the world? No such generalization would have had any bearing whatsoever upon the lives of those who were to inherit the western hemisphere. Lehi taught his children of the principles of faith in Christ and of repentance from personal sin. He taught them regarding the atoning sacrifice of the Lord and how salvation from death and hell would be brought about among all of the children of men. He told his posterity about the ordinances of baptism and the laying on of hands for the Gift of the Holy Ghost, and all other performances which have been and will be required in order for men and women to be exalted in the Celestial Kingdom of God. As a warning to his own children, he testified that the Jews, though a portion of the covenant family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, would fall away from the truth because of their rejection of Jesus Christ, that what little light and truth which still remained among them would fade away, leaving them an isolated and despised people. In their wickedness they would plot against the life of their Messiah, and for their lack of spiritual sensitivity they would rejoice in his death, further cutting themselves off from the blessings of eternity. Lehi also bore witness that Jesus would rise from the dead and through the auspices of the Holy Ghost all the nations of the earth would come to a knowledge of the God of Israel. Lehi was not an itinerate escaping from the marauding hordes of the Babylonians; he was a living prophet of God, a seer *non pareil*, a revelator of eternal truths which never had been conceived by the mind of man without divine assistance.

10.11.20—*gospel*—That is to say, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance from sin, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.

10.11.27—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

10.11.44—*Messiah*—A Hebrew word meaning the “Anointed One”. Translated into Greek, this phrase becomes, in its anglicized form, “Christ”.

10.11.71—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-

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11 And it came to pass after my father had spoken these words he spake unto my brethren concerning the gospel which should be preached among the Jews, and also concerning the dwindling of the Jews in unbelief. And after they had slain the Messiah, who should come, and after he had been slain he should rise from the dead, and should make himself manifest, by the Holy Ghost, unto the Gentiles.

1 Ne. 10:11
MD 490
PM 267, 508,
513, 525
EM 2:728, 731,
749, 893, 977
1 Ne. 10:11–12
AF 320
1 Ne. 10:11–14
DS 3:9

Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

10.12 It is clear from this passage that Lehi had become quite conversant with the Allegory of Zenos which had been preserved upon the Brass Plates of Laban. The tame olive tree was likened unto the House of Israel, and in the time of Lehi and his family, the Kingdom of Judah in particular. The Gentiles too were compared to an Olive tree, but one that was wild with a lack of cultivation. Zenos prophesied regarding the wasting away of the covenant people and the manner which the God of Heaven proposed to save the better part of those children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the promises made unto their fathers. The Diaspora or scattering of Israel was designed to give the promises an opportunity to take root in a place outside of Palestine. The grafting in of the branches of the wild tree testified of the Lord's intention to preserve the fundamental principles of salvation in the hearts and minds of the Gentiles once the Israelites in the promised land had rejected the truth and light that had been placed before them in the person of His Son.

10.12.9—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

10.12.16—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

10.13 Part of the fulfillment of the prophecies which had been uttered by the servants of God had to do with the transporting of Lehi and his family to the Americas. That land had been dedicated to those who would be led by the hand of the Lord to inherit it. As they would soon discover for themselves, they could only be led to the promised land when they were in harmony with each other. Whenever they rebelled against their father, Nephi, or the Lord, the posterity of Lehi were left unto themselves and were at risk of annihilation. Therefore they must needs be, at all times, in “one accord” that they might make progress. Their continual lack of internal harmony led to the family spending eight years in the wilderness of Arabia attempting to conclude a journey that should have only taken them a few months. For that irrational disharmony, the posterity of Lehi nearly drowned in the depths of the great sea. Had it not been for the faithfulness of Nephi, his determined commitment to perform all that the Lord God had given him to do, the family might have perished completely in any number of places along their route.

10.14 In the scattering of Israel is prefigured the death and decomposition of the mortal body. In the gathering of Israel may be seen the promise of immortality through the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Allegory of Zenos, the branches of the wild tree, the Gentiles, prosper for a time, drawing strength from the covenants given to the ancient patriarchs. Eventually, however, there would come a time when the scattered branches would be gathered back to the mother tree, and the Gentile branches would be grafted into the various scions of the original tree hidden throughout the

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12 Yea, even my father spake much concerning the Gentiles, and also concerning the house of Israel, that they should be compared like unto an olive-tree, whose branches should be broken off and should be scattered upon all the face of the earth.

13 Wherefore, he said it must needs be that we should *be led with one accord into the land of promise, unto the fulfilling of the word of the Lord, that we should be scattered upon all the face of the earth.

14 And after the house of Israel should be scattered they should be gathered together again; or, in fine, after the Gentiles had received the fulness of the Gospel, the natural branches of the olive-tree, or the remnants of the house of Israel, should be grafted in, or come to

1 Ne. 10:12
EM 2:828
1 Ne. 10:12–14
AF 327

1 Ne. 10:13
AF 320
* p. 23

1 Ne. 10:14
AF 333, 343
PM 237
EM 2:462, 749

world. The premortal promise of a Messiah, a Redeemer, would come to the knowledge of the entire population of the earth, regardless of their ancestry. The prophesied gathering of scattered Israel is now currently under way.

10.14.6—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

10.14.21—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

10.14.28—*Gospel*—That is to say, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance from sin, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.

10.14.55—*Messiah*—A Hebrew word meaning the “Anointed One”. Translated into Greek, this phrase becomes, in its anglicized form, “Christ”.

10.15 What a rich storehouse of teaching the Large Plates of Nephi must contain, if the snippets which Nephi includes here in the Small Plates are any indication.

10.16 Nephi frequently reminds us of his father’s accommodations in the wilderness (see 2.6, 2.15, 7.22, 9.1, as well as many other places). This must have been of extraordinary importance or Nephi would not have been as exercised about it as he seems to be.

10.16.23—*Lemuel*—A valley named after the second son of Lehi and Sariah. He was for the most part of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

10.17 It will be noted that verse seventeen of this chapter includes portions of two paragraphs in the original formatting of the Book of Mormon. Once one reads the passages that comprise this verse, the decision seems more than reasonable. It is, in fact, one sentence. After reviewing the nature of the numerous embedded clauses within that sentence, it also is clear why the paragraphs were divided as they were originally. Upon hearing all that Lehi had to say about his Vision or Dream of the Tree of Life, Nephi, too, yearned to have similar views. Nephi was likewise impressed by his father’s testimony of the coming of the Messiah into the world and desired to know for himself that these things were true. In many respects, Nephi’s spirit is kin to that of Abraham’s in that he desired further light and knowledge on Celestial matters and was willing to do whatever was necessary to arrive at a point when he might be privy to all that the Lord had communicated previously to His servants. Nephi clearly had learned from his father the way in which those truths

the knowledge of the true Messiah, their Lord and their Redeemer.

15 And after this manner of language did my father prophesy and speak unto my brethren, and also many more things which I do not write in this book; for I have written as many of them as were expedient for me in mine other book.

16 And all these things, of which I have spoken, were done as my father dwelt in a tent, in the valley of Lemuel.

{¶—1830}

17 And it came to pass after I, Nephi, having heard all the words of my father, concerning the things which he saw in a vision, and also the things which he spake by the power of the Holy Ghost, which power he received by faith on the Son of God—and the Son of God was the Messiah who should come

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—I, Nephi, was desirous also that I might see, and hear, and know of

1 Ne. 10:17
AF 107, 117
MD 359, 741
DNTC 1:740
PM 147, 525
MM 4:75
CR85-O 47
1 Ne. 10:17–19
DNTC 3:356
DS 1:47
PM 289
MM 2:174
EM 2:649, 977
EM 3:1162

might be discerned. A man must have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God. He must repent of all of his wrongdoing that he might be a perfect receptacle of truth and light. He must accept the ordinances of salvation, including baptism by immersion for the remission of sins and the laying on of hands for the Gift of the Holy Ghost. That is how Lehi had come to the knowledge he had sought; Nephi also testifies that that methodology was sound, for he acquired his understanding exactly the same way. What was true for Lehi and Nephi is true for all those who have ever desired to have the truth of eternity. Millions of saints have been so blessed.

10.17.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

10.17.58—*Messiah*—A Hebrew word meaning the “Anointed One”. Translated into Greek, this phrase becomes, in its anglicized form, “Christ”.

10.18 Again the plan of salvation has been and ever will be the same for all mankind, wherever they may be found. Eternal truths do not change, nor is there any shadow in them. While it is true that there are degrees of understanding presented to peoples of varying willingness to obey God, yet at the heart of the matter, there are immutable laws which have no variance in them at all. Thus, the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Christ are not at odds with each other. They derive from the same source. Some presentations are preparatory; others contain a fullness. The advantage of having both before us is that we may easily discern the superstructure of the plan of salvation contained in both.

10.19 It must be said as well, that God will not reveal anything that would be beyond our ability to obey. All of the commandments and laws which have been given to us are possible for us to observe. It is possible because we are His children. As we keep those laws and commandments we are prepared to receive further light and knowledge, which will continue our preparation to receive all that the Father knows and understands. But all will be given in proper order and in a timely fashion. Our duty is to keep the commandments and pray for understanding they we might obey with joy in our hearts, filled with faith, drawing all the time closer and closer to that destiny which has been proposed for the righteous.

10.20 Our failure to obey will be upon our own heads because we knew better. Line upon line has been given to us, and in the end, our “inability” to obey the commandments of God will be traced back to some conscious decision to resist the power of the Holy Ghost in our lives.

10.21 Those who seek to do wickedly know that they are doing so. The light of Christ has been given to every man that he might be able to discern between truth and error, between light and dark. The wicked have chosen, at some point, to be wicked, knowing full well that what they deciding to do is contrary to divine will. We have been instructed properly; we have been sent here to be tested. We fail the “test” because we consciously write down answers which we know to be incorrect.

10.22 At the heart of all righteousness is the power and influence of the Holy

these things, by the power of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God unto all those who diligently seek him, as well in times of old as in the time that he should manifest himself unto the children of men.

18 For he is the same yesterday, today, and forever; and the way is prepared for all men from the foundation of the world, if it so be that they repent and come unto him.

19 For he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them, by the power of the Holy Ghost, as well in these times as in times of old, and as well in times of old as in times to come; wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round.

20 Therefore remember, O man, for all thy doings thou shalt be brought into judgment.

21 Wherefore, if ye have sought to do wickedly in the days of your probation, then ye are found unclean before the judgment-seat of God; and no unclean thing can dwell with God; wherefore, ye must be cast off forever.

22 And the Holy Ghost giveth

CR00-A 9
1 Ne. 10:17–20
MD 340
1 Ne. 10:17–22
EM 2:977

1 Ne. 10:18
AF 118
CR88-O 101
CR02-A 91

1 Ne. 10:19
AF 42, 160, 162,
312
MD 546
CR89-A 37
CR93-A 15
CR96-O 79
CR98-A 18
CR00-O 21

1 Ne. 10:21
EM 3:1088,
1090
CR97-A 11
CR98-O 50
CR99-O 41

Ghost. That member of the Godhead will strive with us so long as we are attempting to do our best to overcome the world and its enticements. We know when we offend the light of Christ; we know when we offend the Spirit of God. When we grieve the Spirit, we likewise grieve ourselves and will continue to grieve until we repent of that which we have done wrong, or until we harden our hearts sufficiently that we can no more sense the pain which we have inflicted. Nephi speaks the truth because he cannot do otherwise. He has chosen the better part and will not forsake it. Therefore, he will prosper and his wicked brothers will not.

11.1 Revelation is a product of faith, an exercise of both the heart and mind. Nephi had attended to his father's word, believed all that had been shown to him in the Dream. This vision of the Tree of Life was of critical importance to the patriarch, for it foreshadowed the fate of his posterity. After Lehi, Nephi was the presiding authority in the family. He had no reason to believe that the Father would not be willing to present Nephi with a similar experience that he might be instructive to his own family as well.

11.1.35—*pondering*—As might be expected, this manner of considering a thing is not whimsy. As might be suspected, the origins of the word have to do with measured weight

11.1.45—*Spirit*—Whether Nephi was taken to the mountain in the spirit or was physically transported there we do not know. According to those who have experienced such wonderful opportunities, they report that it was beyond their ability to discern which had transpired.

11.1.54—*mountain*—We do not know, any more than Nephi did, which mountain the Spirit of the Lord bore him to. Some scholars have suggested prominences south of the Valley of Lemuel, near the peninsula of Midian. Others have asserted that Nephi was transported to the peak of Mount Sinai. All of this, without revelation, is mere speculation.

11.2 The Lord and his emissaries are the masters of the rhetorical question. The Spirit of the Lord knew exactly what Nephi desired but he gave Lehi's son the opportunity to frame his own questions in such a manner that the answers would be of best benefit. Spiritual learning is accomplished line upon line, precept upon precept. Nephi thirsted for further light and knowledge, but he was given the privilege of drinking at his own rate, from whichever side of the spring he desired to begin.

11.3 Nephi must have perceived that there was more to be understood about the dream than that which Lehi had shared with his family. Revelations of that magnitude are invariably beyond complete expression. Nephi comprehended the fundamental aspects, but he was undoubtedly troubled by the implications of Lehi's account with regard to his own posterity and that of his brethren.

11.4 The faithful are frequently given the opportunity to express the sentiments of their hearts, the truths which they have come to accept. Such expressions, carefully articulated, strengthen the resolve of the believer, clarify the object his desires, and, accompanied by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, serve to reveal the fundamental truth of the seeker's faith unto

authority that I should speak these things, and deny them not.

{Chapter III, continued}
(Chapter 11)

{¶—1830}

1 FOR it came to pass after I had desired to know the things that my father had seen, and believing that the Lord was able to make them known unto me, as I sat *pondering in mine heart I was caught away in the Spirit of the Lord, yea, into an exceedingly high mountain, which I never had before seen, and upon which I never had before set my foot.

2 And the Spirit said unto me: Behold, what desirest thou?

3 And I said: I desire to behold the things which my father saw.

4 And the Spirit said unto me: Believest thou that thy father saw the tree of which he hath spoken?

1 Ne. 11
AF 94, 252
MD 489. 742,
752, 824
DNTC2:445
JC 46, 51
PM 603
EM 1: 54, 57,
142, 146, 184
EM 2:724, 748,
827
EM 3:1003,
1004
CR92-O 38
* p. 24
1 Ne. 11:1
DNTC 2:88
DNTC 3:586
MM 1:314, 414
EM 3:1164
CR90-A 34
1 Ne. 11:1–12
AF 42
1 Ne. 11:1–23
CR92-A 39
1 Ne. 11:2–12
AF 159

salvation.

11.5 What a glorious awareness of the workings of the Spirit of the Lord! Nephi was so completely filled with the power and influence of the Spirit of the Lord that he was conscious of the angel's knowledge regarding his acceptance of his father's teachings. There are few unities that transcend this which Nephi is experiencing.

11.6 That Nephi trusted in the power of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob there can be no doubt (see 11.1). But it is not mere confidence in the supreme being that ensures his success; it is his faith in the coming of the Messiah, the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ and his atoning sacrifice which guarantees the successful realization of his quest. Idle curiosity does not bring truth and light into one's life.

11.6.16—*Hosanna*—The Hebrew used here comes from roots which mean to “be open, wide, free, succor”, together with a particle of incitement and entreaty usually associated with the imperative, usually translated as “pray of, beseech of”. It conveys the meaning “We beseech thee to free us, to succor us”. The word was most frequently employed in association with the altar of sacrifice. Is this exuberant expression solely the articulation of the Spirit of the Lord, or is the Spirit also providing Nephi with that which he should always utter in connection with the spirit and process of revelation? The answer is self-evident.

11.6.40—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

11.7 Bearing testimony of the person of the Son of God, his ministry and teachings is as sweet as the taste of the fruit upon the Tree of Life. Thus have the missions of the prophets been described before Nephi's day, and since.

11.7.12—*sign*—The phrase that follows this word constitutes the “sign”. Nephi and his posterity would always be able to recognize those who had partaken of the fruit of the Tree of Life, because they would always bear testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ, and not be ashamed.

11.8 Nephi had desired to understand more fully the Vision of the Tree of Life. The Spirit of the Lord will lead Nephi through a series of related vignettes which will aid in his complete comprehension of his father's teaching. Attending to where each of the vignettes begins and ends will help us in our own comprehension as well. The Tree itself, as described by Nephi, is a receptacle of truth and light, the embodiment of life and perfection.

11.8.12—*Look!*—Almost all of the separate instructional vignettes are introduced by this and similar words. In some respects, this use of the word “Look!” is like unto the typical use of the word “Hearken!” There is more than mere observation that is being commanded. “Look and comprehend!” is more of the attitude expected, just as “Hearken!” means to “Listen and obey!”

11.8.35—*beauty*—There are several words in Hebrew which have been

5 And I said: Yea, thou knowest that I believe all the words of my father.

{*¶*—1830}

6 And when I had spoken these words, the Spirit cried with a loud voice, saying: Hosanna to the Lord, the most high God; for he is God over all the earth, yea, even above all. And blessed art thou, Nephi, because thou believest in the Son of the most high God; wherefore, thou shalt behold the things which thou hast desired.

1 Ne. 11:6
PM 147
1 Ne. 11:7
EM 4:1569
1 Ne. 11:7–24
EM 2:729

7 And behold this thing shall be given unto thee for a sign, that after thou hast beheld the tree which bore the fruit which thy father tasted, thou shalt also behold a man descending out of heaven, and him shall ye witness; and after ye have witnessed him ye shall bear record that it is the Son of God.

{*¶*—1830}

8 And it came to pass that the Spirit said unto me: Look! And I looked and beheld a tree; and it was like unto the tree which my father had seen; and the beauty thereof was far beyond, yea, exceeding of all beauty; and the whiteness thereof did exceed the whiteness of the driven snow.

1 Ne. 11:8
AF 159
1 Ne. 11:8–25,
35–36
EM 3:1431
1 Ne. 11:8–9
CR00-A 99

translated into English as “beauty”, but the one which most likely is being used by Nephi in his implementation of Reformed Egyptian, has at its heart the notion of “brightness, filled with light, fair”.

11.8.47—*whiteness*—“Whiteness”, in its most typical scriptural usage, has to do with “righteousness, perfection, and truth”.

11.9 Scholars have postulated as to the exact tree image which Nephi and his father saw. It is generally portrayed as some kind of deciduous tree with lofty branches and thick foliage. For the Jews, however, the figure of the Tree of Life was almost invariably that of a date palm. The royal date palm which abounds in the Middle East is considered by many cultural as being sacred, inasmuch as almost every aspect of the tree contributes to the cycle of life. The innermost sanctuary of the Temple at Jerusalem was decorated with alternating images of cherubim and palm trees. It does not take much imagination for realize that Nephi has perceived the richness of the symbolism insofar as the Tree is concerned.

11.10 Nephi’s first request of the Spirit of the Lord was to see the Tree of Life that his father had seen in his Dream (see 11.2–3). Having been granted his request, Nephi is asked again what he wanted. It is one thing to see a vision, it is quite another to understand what has been seen.

11.11 Nephi’s parenthetical asides are informative and delightful, even though we may not fully understand the motivation for them. Who was the Spirit of the Lord in this instance? Some have suggested that it was the Holy Ghost, the third member of the Godhead. This assertion is generally put forth in an attempt to demonstrate that the Holy Ghost is a spirit in the form of a man. Others have suggested that the “Spirit of the Lord” was Jehovah himself, who was at that time an unembodied spirit like unto the Holy Ghost. In either case, the appearance of this glorious being would have been like unto that of the Tree, beautiful and bright. Nephi must have begun to make a connection between the Tree and the being who was instructing him. At this point, we might conclude, Nephi wished to know for himself exactly what the tree represented, or better said, who the Tree represented. The answer would not necessarily identify the name of the messenger

11.12 The divine being with whom Nephi had been speaking commands Nephi to once again engage himself as a seer. At that point, the Spirit of the Lord disappears. The remainder of the exposition of Lehi’s Dream will be conducted by another messenger who is described as an angel come down from heaven (see 11.14).

11.12.11—*Look!*—Almost all of the separate instructional vignettes are introduced by this and similar words. In some respects, this use of the word “Look!” is like unto the typical use of the word “Hearken!” There is more than mere observation that is being commanded. “Look and comprehend!” is more of the attitude expected, just as “Hearken!” means to “Listen and obey!”

11.13 Nephi wished to understand the significance, the meaning, of the Tree of Life. He is then shown many of the cities of Palestine including Jerusalem and Nazareth. It is interesting that Nephi recognized the latter as well as the former.

11.13.15—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name

{*¶*—1830}

9 And it came to pass after I had seen the tree, I said unto the Spirit: I behold thou hast shown unto me the tree which is precious above all.

10 And he said unto me: What desirest thou?

11 And I said unto him: To know the interpretation thereof—for I spake unto him as a man speaketh; for I beheld that he was in the form of a man; yet nevertheless, I knew that it was the Spirit of the Lord; and he spake unto me as a man speaketh with another.

{*¶*—1830}

12 And it came to pass that he said unto me: Look! And I looked as if to look upon him, and I saw him not; for he had gone from before my presence.

{*¶*—1830}

13 And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the great city of Jerusalem, and also other cities. And I beheld the city of Nazareth; and in the city of Nazareth I beheld a virgin, and she was exceedingly

1 Ne. 11:11
AF 42, 160
EM 3:1406

1 Ne. 11:12
CR85-O 47

1 Ne. 11:13
DNTEC 1:108
PM 461
1 Ne. 11:13–14,
18–20
EM 2:731

<p>literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.</p>	<p>fair and white.</p>	<p>1 Ne. 11:13–20 EM 2:702, 863 EM 3:1161</p>
<p>11.13.26—<i>Nazareth</i>—A small village near the southwestern border of Galilee with Samaria. This was the place of abode for both Joseph and Mary before they were husband and wife, and their abode with Jesus and the rest of their family after their return from Egypt. It was a place of little consequence in the eyes of most Galileans, who themselves were considered rude and uneducated in the eyes of the cultivated Jews of Judea. The fact that Jesus would be despised as a result of similar bigotry would identify him with the town by analogy. If this considered opinion of Nazareth had existed in the days prior to Lehi’s exodus into the wilderness, it certainly must have contributed to Nephi’s understanding of the condescension of God (see 11.16).</p>		<p>1 Ne. 11:13–21 MD 471, 822 PM 381 MM 1:314 EM 3:1163</p>
<p>11.13.36—<i>virgin</i>—This is, of course, Mary the mother of Jesus. Much has been written about the meaning of this word, most of which has been vacuous and without merit. Some have suggested that “virgin” merely means a “young married woman”. While some evidence may be found for that alternative meaning, yet one would have to wonder what then constitutes the miracle or sign that Isaiah provided Ahaz. How extraordinarily rare is it that a “young married woman” gives birth? But if a “virgin”, assuming the primary meaning of the word, were to give birth to a son, having not known a man in a marital relationship, would that not be extraordinary, nay, unique? The Hebrew word from which “virgin” is derived signifies “a concealed woman”; that is to say, a woman who has not been “uncovered” by her husband, one who is what precisely “virgin” implies in the English language.</p>		<p>1 Ne. 11:13–19 PM 466 1 Ne. 11:13–33 EM 2:749 CR01-O 78</p>
<p>11.13.41–43—<i>fair and white</i>—Should we not conclude that Mary was beautiful and righteous is well? We ought not to allow the radical claims of the sectarians affect our appreciation of this loveliest of women.</p>	<p>{<i>¶</i>—1830}</p>	<p>1 Ne. 11:13,15, 18, 20 CR99-O 90</p>
<p>11.14 At this point Nephi’s growing understanding of the Vision of the Tree of Life will be facilitated by an angel rather than the Spirit of the Lord. The rhetorical questions continue to abound, however.</p>	<p>14 And it came to pass that I saw the heavens open; and an angel came down and stood before me; and he said unto me: Nephi, what beholdest thou?</p>	<p>1 Ne. 11:14–35 AF 84 1 Ne. 11:14–36 CR86-A 76 CR99-O 90</p>
<p>11.14.14—<i>angel</i>—We are not privy to the identity of the angel sent by the Father to instruct Nephi in the remainder of the Vision. Nor do we know if Lehi had been instructed by either of those who were engaged to teaching Nephi. We may speculate, however, as many have done in the past.</p>		
<p>11.14.26—<i>Nephi</i>—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.</p>		
<p>11.15 The Lord God of Israel delights in the chastity of women and there have been many millions who have lived their lives in perfect morality, within the bonds of the covenants of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. From among all of these virtuous daughters of God, one was selected to serve as the mother of the Son of God, one whose humility and desire for obedience would prepare her to nurture the Messiah, preparatory to his atoning for the sins of mankind.</p>	<p>15 And I said unto him: A virgin, most beautiful and fair above all other virgins.</p>	<p>1 Ne. 11:15 DNCTC 1:82 EM 4:1579 CR93-O 5 1 Ne. 11:15–20 CR00-A 99</p>

There was no one more capable of fulfilling that sacred calling than Mary of Nazareth. The central point in the case for the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth has to do with the fact that he was born of a woman who had not known a man; that is to say, Mary had not been “uncovered” by Joseph or any other mortal man. She was with child begotten of God the Eternal Father in an unrevealed manner, and was yet a virgin in every significance of the word. Some religionists and scriptorians have suggested that Mary was a “perpetual virgin”, notwithstanding the birth of her firstborn and her formal marriage to Joseph. There is nothing in the Scriptures that will substantiate that position. It is understandable how such an exaggerated view of the mother of Jesus could come to be accepted, but for all of its tenderness and appeal, it is not true. After the birth of Jesus, Joseph and Mary had several children together, some of whom are named in the text of the New Testament.

11.15.7—*virgin*—This is, of course, Mary the mother of Jesus. Much has been written about the meaning of this word, most of which has been vacuous and without merit. Some have suggested that “virgin” merely means a “young married woman”. While some evidence may be found for that alternative meaning, yet one would have to wonder what then constitutes the miracle or sign that Isaiah provided Ahaz. How extraordinarily rare is it that a “young married woman” gives birth? But if a “virgin”, assuming the primary meaning of the word, were to give birth to a son, having not known a man in a marital relationship, would that not be extraordinary, nay, unique? The Hebrew word from which “virgin” is derived signifies “a concealed woman”; that is to say, a woman who has not been “uncovered” by her husband, one who is what precisely “virgin” implies in the English language.

11.16 As egalitarian as we all pretend to be, it is not true that Jesus is our equal. He is our superior in every conceivable sense of the word. We sometimes deceive ourselves into believing that we are far greater than we have any reason to expect. It is only in abject humility that we will ever amount to anything in the Kingdom of God on the earth. In terms of intelligence, he is greater than all of the other spirit children of our Heavenly Father put together. In terms of compassion, there is no one who has ever lived upon this earth who is capable of perfectly loving the children of men as does Jesus. In fact, as odd as this may seem, there is no one who loves himself as much as Jesus cares for each individual child of God. There is no one who has observed to keep the commandments of God the Father as has Jesus, either in the premortal existence or in mortal life. He constitutes the embodiment of humility and obedience. He was and is the great Jehovah, the Word of God, the executor of the Father’s will. Notwithstanding his stature in time and eternity, he was born of a woman and sojourned upon the earth virtually unrecognized by the mass of humanity. His life was sought by the devil and his minions from the moment of birth. His friends and associates were beleaguered because of their faith in him. He was mocked and ridiculed, abused by wicked men, willingly allowing himself to be taken unjustly and crucified in an ignominious manner.

11.16.9—*condescension*—The English word “condescension” means to “voluntarily descend from a lofty rank to associate with inferiors”.

11.17 That God would love His creations is condescension indeed. That Jesus Christ, the only mortal who ever lived his life in complete compliance with the will of God, willingly submitted his life for the redemption of a lost and fallen people is a condescension of a magnitude likewise incomprehensible. Nephi,

1 Ne. 11:15,18
EM 4:1510

16 And he said *unto me: Knowest thou the condescension of God?

* p. 25
1 Ne. 11:16
MM 1:313
EM 1:305
1 Ne. 11:16–17
CR02-A 91

17 And I said unto him: I know that he loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things.

1 Ne. 11:17
CR84-A 29
CR85-A 90
CR92-A 35

however, does understand that the sons and daughters of God are within the pale of the love of God.

11.18 The motherhood of Mary in association with the birth of her firstborn child presents the most sublime of condescension ever known to mankind, both by the Father and the Son.

11.18.8—*virgin*—This is, of course, Mary the mother of Jesus. Much has been written about the meaning of this word, most of which has been vacuous and without merit. Some have suggested that “virgin” merely means a “young married woman”. While some evidence may be found for that alternative meaning, yet one would have to wonder what then constitutes the miracle or sign that Isaiah provided Ahaz. How extraordinarily rare is it that a “young married woman” gives birth? But if a “virgin”, assuming the primary meaning of the word, were to give birth to a son, having not known a man in a marital relationship, would that not be extraordinary, nay, unique? The Hebrew word from which “virgin” is derived signifies “a concealed woman”; that is to say, a woman who has not been “uncovered” by her husband, one who is what precisely “virgin” implies in the English language.

11.18.25—*flesh*—Of the spirit birth of Jesus Christ we know little or nothing, but of his mortal birth we are better informed.

11.19 Nephi had first wished to experience the vision or dream that his father had received from God (see 11.3). Having viewed the Tree, he then desired to understand what the Tree signified (see 11.11). In response, he is shown Mary the mother of Jesus and eventually the infant Messiah. It is at that point that he understands the interpretation of the Tree (see 11.22). The angel and Nephi are reverentially circumspect in their treatment of the conception and birth of Jesus. So also we ought to be.

11.19.11–12—*carried away*—From the time of Mary’s conception until she gives birth in Bethlehem, Mary is led from place to place by the power of the Spirit of God. One need only peruse the exchange between Mary and her cousin Elizabeth to see one small example (see *LK-C 1.39–56*).

11.20 In spite of all of the learned arguments to the contrary by those who think they are wise, Jesus was born of a virgin and as an infant was nurtured by a virgin.

11.20.7—*virgin*—This is, of course, Mary the mother of Jesus. Much has been written about the meaning of this word, most of which has been vacuous and without merit. Some have suggested that “virgin” merely means a “young married woman”. While some evidence may be found for that alternative meaning, yet one would have to wonder what then constitutes the miracle or sign that Isaiah provided Ahaz. How extraordinarily rare is it that a “young married woman” gives birth? But if a “virgin”, assuming the primary meaning of the word, were to give birth to a son, having not known a man in a marital relationship, would that not be extraordinary, nay, unique? The Hebrew word from which “virgin” is derived signifies “a concealed woman”; that is to say, a woman who has not been “uncovered” by her husband, one who is what precisely “virgin” implies in the English language.

11.21 Lest there have been any misunderstanding, the angel clearly tells Nephi that the infant child held in Mary’s arms is the Son of God, the Redeemer of

18 And he said unto me: Behold, the virgin whom thou seest is the mother of the Son of God, after the manner of the flesh.

{~~9~~—1830}

19 And it came to pass that I beheld that she was carried away in the Spirit; and after she had been carried away in the Spirit for the space of a time the angel spake unto me, saying: Look!

20 And I looked and beheld the virgin again, bearing a child in her arms.

21 And the angel said unto me: Behold the Lamb of God, yea, even

CR93-A 97
CR94-A 38
CR99-O 6
CR00-A 92
CR01-A 75
CR02-O 18
1 Ne. 11:18
DNTC 1:82,
275, 409
DNTC 3:141
DS 1:145
PM 125
EM 1:305
EM 2:581, 729
1 Ne. 11:18–19
MD 743
PM 148
1 Ne. 11:18–20
MD 291, 471
1 Ne. 11:18–21
CR88-O 102
1 Ne. 11:18–24
CR93-A 34
1 Ne. 11:19
EM 2:729
1 Ne. 11:19–21
DNTC 1:83
MM 1:414

1 Ne. 11:20–22
EM 1:305

1 Ne. 11:21
MD 743
PM 147

the world, the anointed Messiah who would be the means of overcoming both death and hell for and in behalf of the sons and daughters of God.

11.21.9–11—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

11.22 We ought not be confounded at the surprising leap of logic that Nephi makes in associating the Lamb of God with the Love of God. The provision of a Savior for His children derived from a Fatherly love, and not just from a Creator’s love. The salvation of mankind would require the services of a spirit-child, an extraordinary spirit-child, one who had proven faithful in all things that had been given to him to do, a well-beloved child. The Firstborn spirit-child of the Father was that Son who would take upon himself the consequences of mankind’s succumbing to the temptations of a fallen world; he would be a proxy, a sacrificial Lamb of God. Jesus’ willingness to submit himself wholly to the labor of the Messiah, came as a direct result of his perfect love for his brethren. His love is like unto the Father’s and derives from the same source: a complete conformity to the truth, in all places and at all times. Jesus loves perfectly because he lives perfectly. The atonement of Jesus Christ provides for the redemption of all men. Jesus was also empowered to overcome the Fall of Adam, that which brought death and physical misery into the world. As all who partake of the fruit of the Tree of Life are filled with sweetness and beauty of the fruit, so also those who partake of eternal life are filled with loving gratitude for their Savior, together with a willingness to encourage others to likewise enter in upon the straight and narrow path, grasping the rod of iron until they come to the Tree and taste of the fruit. There is not greater gift from God than eternal life; that is, the power to love and live as God does.

11.23 Without the resurrection from the dead and the remission of personal sins, there can be no fullness of joy.

11.24 As a man might delight in the eating of a delicious fruit, so also those who have partaken of the atoning sacrifice of Christ through faith and repentance, through attending to the covenants associated with that spiritual reorientation, feel to rejoice in their redemption from death and hell. They have found a nourishing, shady place in the midst of a wilderness. They have, as Jesus phrased another way many times, found shelter beneath the wings of his salvation.

11.24.12—*Look!*—Almost all of the separate instructional vignettes are introduced by this and similar words. In some respects, this use of the word “Look!” is like unto the typical use of the word “Hearken!” There is more than mere observation that is being commanded. “Look and comprehend!” is more of the attitude expected, just as “Hearken!” means to “Listen and obey!”

11.25 The Rod of Iron is defined by Nephi as the Word of God and is often interpreted as the written scriptures and the teachings of the living prophets. We cannot deny the truth of that declaration. However, in the context of the Dream, there is at least one specific person who is apparently equated with the Rod. John the Baptist, as the Forerunner to Christ, is the one prophet who we can easily point to as one who directly led the children of Israel to the feet of Jesus Christ. It is he who was the voice crying in the wilderness to make His

the Son of the Eternal Father! Knowest thou the meaning of the tree which thy father saw?

22 And I answered him, saying: Yea, it is the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men; wherefore, it is the most desirable above all things.

23 And he spake unto me, saying: Yea, and the most joyous to the soul.

24 And after he had said these words, he said unto me: Look! And I looked, and I beheld the Son of God going forth among the children of men; and I saw many fall down at his feet and worship him.

{¶—1830}

25 And it came to pass that I beheld that the rod of iron, which my father had seen, was the word of God, which led to the fountain of living waters, or to the tree of life; which waters are a representation of the love of God; and I

EM 1:305
EM 2:739, 746,
749
CR93-O 5
CR00-A 100
1 Ne. 11:21–23
DNTC 2:240
EM 3:1429
CR88-O 48
1 Ne. 11:22
EM 2:846
CR82-A 97
CR82-O 15
CR92-A 14
CR00-A 100
1 Ne. 11:22–23
CR98-O 34
CR02-A 98
1 Ne. 11:22,25
CR92-A 14
CR00-A 100

1 Ne. 11:23
CR92-A 14
CR00-A 100

1 Ne. 11:25
DNTC 3:517
MLM 591
EM 3:1429
EM 4:1487
CR85-O 47
CR86-A 6

paths straight. In John's day, the mind and will of God was revealed through the Baptist, inasmuch as he held the Keys of the Kingdom of God as the High Priest of the Aaronic Priesthood. Who held the keys of the Kingdom after John's death at the hands of Herod Antipas? Was it not he who was the High Priest of the Melchizedek priesthood, even Jesus himself? After Jesus' ascension into Heaven who possessed those keys, the power to administer the affairs of the Kingdom of God upon the earth? Was it not Simon Peter and the other Apostles? Where are those keys today? Which man or body of men constitutes the Rod of Iron, the way of safe passage to the Fountain of Living Waters or the Tree of Life? There can be only one answer. Those who have received that power and authority through duly authorized servants of the Living God. They are the prophets, seers, and revelators of our own day, who guide and direct the affairs of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth at this very hour.

11.25.28–31—*fountain of living waters*—This is one of the most extraordinary phrases in the Book of Mormon. We are presented with a hitherto undisclosed literal opposition, one that did not appear in the account given by Lehi himself. It is the opposition, however, that leads ultimately to a complete understanding as to the nature of the Dream and the theological implications which are discoursed upon by Lehi toward the end of his life. Lehi stated in his explication of the Vision that there was a fountain and a river which ran between the Tree of Life and the Great and Spacious Building (see 8.13–14). Nephi teaches his brethren that the waters of the river were “filthy”, a fact that eluded his father's attention because his mind was preoccupied with other concerns (see 15.26–36). The angel declares to Nephi that the fountain from whence the river began is also filthy (see 12.16). What then is the “fountain of living waters”? The Fountain of Filthy Waters and the Fountain of Living Waters cannot possibly be the same thing. As it turns out, this is the only reference to the “fountain of living waters” within the context of the Dream, and in the context of this verse the Fountain of Living Waters and the Tree of Life are equated. They both represent the love of God, or the person and atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. So we may conclude that there are two “fountains”, one of which is mentioned only in this singular place in the narrative. Might we also conclude that if there are two “fountains”, there might also be two metaphorical Trees? Certainly there is precedence. The account of the events that take place in the Garden of Eden assure us that the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was placed in the Garden in opposition to the Tree of Life. The fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil brought death into the world when Adam and Eve partook thereof at Satan's behest. So, therefore, on the one hand we have the Tree of Life which bears the fruit of eternal life and on the other we have the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil whose fruit sows the seeds of death. If the Tree of Life and the Fountain of living waters are to be understood as representing the same figure, Jesus Christ or the Love of God, what then do the Fountain of Filthy Waters, and by association the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil represent, if not Lucifer and the hatred which he bears against all mankind? Lehi will discuss this opposition at length in his farewell address to his son Jacob.

11.26 This is the second reference to the condescension of God. In the first (see 11.16–20), the condescension of God is manifested in the conception and mortal birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. Here we see that the condescension of

also beheld that the tree of life was a representation of the love of God.

CR88-A 23
 CR89-A 5
 CR89-O 93
 CR90-O 83
 CR92-A 15
 CR92-O 113
 CR99-O 6
 CR99-O 7
 CR01-O 86

26 And the angel said unto me again: Look and behold the condescension of God!

1 Ne. 11:26–33
 DNTC 3:548
 EM 2:894

God is demonstrated by Jesus' submission to the baptism of John, notwithstanding that the Savior was without sin and had no need to repent. Additionally, as was stated before, Jesus was the High Priest of the Melchizedek Priesthood and as such could authorize anyone to perform any of the ordinances of the lesser or Aaronic Priesthood. In his deep and abiding humility, however, Jesus chose to honor John. Thirdly, in a literal condescension, the Holy Ghost descended from Heaven and fell upon Jesus, accompanied by the sign of the dove (see *MT-C 3.16*, *MK-C 1.10*, *LK-C 3.22*, and *JN-C 1.32-34*).

11.27 John the Baptist understood his relationship to Jesus and beseeched of the Savior that he, John, might be baptized at his superior hands. Jesus submitted himself into John's hands by testifying that in this fashion would they two fulfill all righteousness. Both Jesus and John the Baptist observed to do the mind and will of God in this matter.

11.27.7—*Redeemer*—The English word “Redeemer” derives from roots which mean to “obtain, purchase, ransom”.

11.27.22—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah. In this instance Nephi is speaking of John the Baptist.

11.27.32-34—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

11.28 The burden of the Gospels of the New Testament is the mortal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ among the covenant people dwelling in the land of Palestine. Who can read the accounts penned by the evangelists and not be aware of the glorious manifestations of power and wisdom revealed among the Jews in the Meridian of Time? In spite of the fact that the wonders and miracles followed Jesus in every place where the faithful abided, yet in the end he was rejected, tormented, and delivered up unto death at the hands of wicked men.

11.29 Note that this verse is divided between two paragraphs in the original printing of the Book of Mormon. The “twelve others” of course, were the Apostles of the Lamb whom Jesus chose and ordained unto the apostolic priesthood from among his disciples. It is intriguing that the Twelve are carried away in the Spirit for a time as had been Mary, the mother of Jesus. Where in the New Testament do we read of this glorious experience? Certainly whatever and whenever this extraordinary event took place, it seems to be on a par with that experience which Nephi is having, that Moses and Enoch and all of the holy prophets have had since the beginning of time. Perhaps that account of the Twelve in the presence of God has been lost or perhaps they were forbidden to write of it, given the sacredness of the occasion.

11.30 Angels, the ministers of God, have counseled with the faithful among the children of men since the days of Adam and Eve. The ministry of angels is an aspect of the priesthood of God, both of the Aaronic and the Melchizedek. Before the birth of Jesus Christ in the flesh, angels communed with the saints of God that they might know what their duty was in connection with his

27 And I looked and beheld the Redeemer of the world, of whom my father had spoken; and I also beheld the prophet who should prepare the way before him. And the Lamb of God went forth and was baptized of him; and after he was baptized, I beheld the heavens open, and the Holy Ghost come down out of heaven and abide upon him in the form of a dove.

28 And I beheld that he went forth ministering unto the people, in power and great glory; and the multitudes were gathered together to hear him; and I beheld that they cast him out from among them.

29 And I also beheld twelve others following him.

{¶—1830}

And it came to pass that they were carried away in the Spirit from before my face, and I saw them not.

30 And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me again, saying: Look! And I looked, and I beheld the heavens open again, and I saw angels descending upon the chil-

1 Ne. 11:27
AF 168
AGQ 2:76
MD 393, 490,
712
DNTC 1:116,
123
PM 381, 484
MM 1:394, 404
EM 1:93, 428

1 Ne. 11:28
PM 513
MM 1:435
1 Ne. 11:28-31
EM 3:1163
1 Ne. 11:28-36
MD 490
DNTC 1:210

1 Ne. 11:29
MD 291
DS 1:145
EM 1:203
1 Ne. 11:29,34-
36
EM 1:61
1 Ne. 11:29-36
PM 522

advent into the world. Thus, Zacharias, Mary, Joseph, the wise men from the east, the shepherds, Simeon, Anna, and a host of others were visited by angels and blessed by the knowledge of that which was about to transpire. That ministry continued throughout that opening dispensation and continued until the keys of the priesthood were lost through apostasy. Angels came on many occasions to comfort and strength Jesus in his mortal ministry. Certainly the presence of Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration constituted ministering angels for Peter, James, and John. Undoubtedly there were countless others who were inspired by the emissaries of heaven to hearken to the voice of Jesus and his Apostles as these latter traveled throughout Galilee, Judea, Samaria, and other provinces in the holy land. Many of them may have had direct communication with those angelic ministers.

11.30.14—*Look!*—Almost all of the separate instructional vignettes are introduced by this and similar words. In some respects, this use of the word “Look!” is like unto the typical use of the word “Hearken!” There is more than mere observation that is being commanded. “Look and comprehend!” is more of the attitude expected, just as “Hearken!” means to “Listen and obey!”

11.31 On the one hand there were many among the children of men who were inspired by the angels of God; on the other were those who had been possessed or otherwise afflicted by the minions of the devil. Among those who were overcome by the power of the adversary, were men and women who were willing to put their trust and confidence in the Son of God, and through faith in Christ coupled with their effective repentance of sin, they were healed of all ill, both physical and spiritual.

11.31.8—*Look!*—Almost all of the separate instructional vignettes are introduced by this and similar words. In some respects, this use of the word “Look!” is like unto the typical use of the word “Hearken!” There is more than mere observation that is being commanded. “Look and comprehend!” is more of the attitude expected, just as “Hearken!” means to “Listen and obey!”

11.31.16–18—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

11.32 What self-endangering arrogance and pride! The Lamb of God came into the world to bless and benefit the fallen, yet those who had most need of his tender mercies lifted up their heel against the Messiah, an object of their disdain. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus articulated the fate of those who persisted in their unrighteous judgment; that they themselves would be judged and found wanting, without God in this life, and without salvation in the next (see *MT-C 7.1–2*). Rather than being subjected to the testimony of false witnesses, bigotry, and ill will, those who oppressed and berated the Lord of Life would simply be exposed to the full weight and measure of truth and light, without the protection of the Living Christ, he who they rejected out of hand.

11.32.14—*Look!*—Almost all of the separate instructional vignettes are introduced by this and similar words. In some respects, this use of the word “Look!” is like unto the typical use of the word “Hearken!” There is more than mere observation that is being commanded. “Look and comprehend!” is more of the attitude expected, just as “Hearken!” means to “Listen and obey!”

11.32.21–23—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic

dren of men; and they did minister unto them.

31 And he spake unto me again, saying: Look! And I looked, and I beheld the Lamb of God going forth among *the children of men. And I beheld multitudes of people who were sick, and who were afflicted with all manner of diseases, and with devils and unclean spirits; and the angel spake and showed all these things unto me. And they were healed by the power of the Lamb of God; and the devils and the unclean spirits were cast out.

{*¶—1830*}

32 And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me again, saying: Look! And I looked and beheld the Lamb of God, that he was taken by the people; yea, the Son of the everlasting God was judged of the world; and I saw and bear record.

1 Ne. 11:31
DNTC 1:171
PM 491
MM 2:40
EM 2:727
CR87-O 102
* p. 26

1 Ne. 11:32
MD 744
PM 147
1 Ne. 11:32–33
MA 41
EM 1:305
EM 3:1006
CR93-A 34
1 Ne. 11:32–34
MD 490

relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

11.33 The prophets, seers, and revelators of every dispensation have witnessed the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus was slain upon the cross outside the walls of Jerusalem, but it was not the act of crucifixion that killed him. He would have died regardless of the style of execution. The death of the Savior was a willful release of his spirit, a release that came after suffering body, mind, and spirit for the sins of all mankind. That expiation began in the Garden of Gethsemane where his sufferings became so sore that the evangelist testified that blood came from every pore of his body. Any other man would have died instantly at the onslaught of that atoning sacrifice. Jesus, however, being the literal physical son of God the eternal Father, though his perfect love, chose to continue in his mortal ministry until the final payment for sin was made. Once the possibility of redemption for all was assured, Jesus simply said, “It is finished” and allowed his spirit to depart his completely exhausted body.

11.33.3—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

11.34 As the Gospel of Jesus Christ was taught to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the unrepentant and corrupt sought also to destroy the disciples of Jesus. The persecution of the Church became so intense in that city that all but the Apostles were forced to flee to other climes (see *ACT-C 8.1*). Saul of Tarsus, in his zealous fashion, pursued many of them until the Lord revealed himself to the man on the road to Damascus, cutting short his reckless persecution of the saints of God. The waves of opposition would ebb and flow in the ensuing years, but eventually the wicked of the world would have their way with the prophets and Apostles, ultimately driving them from the world. This was true in the eastern hemisphere, nations raising up arms against the chosen emissaries of the Lord God of Israel. It would also be true in the western hemisphere. The resurrected Christ appeared to the ancient inhabitants of the Americas and established his Church among them, ordaining Twelve with the same authority to conduct the affairs of the Kingdom of God upon the earth. As the world encroached upon the saints of those days, the Apostles among the Nephites would also be warred against by wicked men.

11.34.22—*apostles*—The Greek roots from which the term “apostles” derives originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

11.35 Most readers of Nephi’s account of his father’s Dream point to the great and spacious building and blithely condemn the foolishness of the uninspired,

33 And I, Nephi, saw that he was lifted up upon the cross and slain for the sins of the world.

34 And after he was slain I saw the multitudes of the earth, that they were gathered together to fight against the apostles of the Lamb; for thus were the twelve called by the angel of the Lord.

35 And the multitude of the earth was gathered together; and I beheld

1 Ne. 11:33
MD 172
PM 528
MM 4:204
EM 1:145
EM 2:727, 731

1 Ne. 11:34–35
EM 1:57
1 Ne. 11:34–36
MD 291
DNTC 3:548
EM 2:731

1 Ne. 11:35–36
CR86-A 6

those so lacking in spiritual sensitivity that they cannot perceive the goodness and mercy of Christ nor the blessings which he proffers them. Yet one wonders as to why the world would even give the slightest attention to the labors of an impoverished few. Would such a “depraved” group have even enough awareness to find fault in those of no import to them? In Lehi’s Vision of the Tree of Life, the people of the building were mocking, scoffing, and pointing fingers of scorn at those partaking of the fruit of the Tree of Life (see 8.27–28, 33). The real tragedy of this aspect of the Dream is revealed in Nephi’s interpretation given in the present verse. The originators of the scoffing, scorning, and mockery were apostates, those who had knowingly forsaken their covenants with the Lord God. They were wicked segments of the House of Israel who, not being content to merely live a suborned existence in a carnal world, lashed out at those whom they should have loved as brethren. The most effective persecutors of the saints of God have always been those who should have been saints themselves.

11.35.53—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

11.35.62—*apostles*—The Greek roots from which the term “apostles” derives originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

11.36 The fate of this fallen world is sealed. The pride of this world, its lofty self-evaluation, will not and cannot stand before the revelation of the glory of God. The appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ at his Second Coming will completely eviscerate those who have established their personal worth in the temptations of this world. The honors of men amount to a tissue of lies in the furnace of the honor of God the Father and His Son. The riches and art of the world appear as mere detritus when compared with the creative powers of the priesthood of God, that power by which the universe is sustained and beautified. Those who have glutted themselves on the pleasures of the world will find themselves suffering a thirst and a hunger which cannot be quenched in their wicked and fallen state. Their insatiated bitterness will canker their souls, and for a long time they will lift up their eyes from hell and desire what they might have had if they had but loved instead of mocked their brethren. Warring against the saints of God is a folly to be pitied; there is no grace that attends that course of action.

11.36.63—*apostles*—The Greek roots from which the term “apostles” derives originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to

that they were in a large and spacious building, like unto the building which my father saw. And the angel of the Lord spake unto me again, saying: Behold the world and the wisdom thereof; yea, behold the house of Israel hath gathered together to fight against the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

CR89-A 6

{~~9~~—1830}

36 And it came to pass that I saw and bear record, that the great and spacious building was the pride of the world; and it fell, and the fall thereof was exceedingly great. And the angel of the Lord spake unto me again, saying: Thus shall be the destruction of all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, that shall fight against the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

1 Ne. 11:36
CR87-A 88

time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

12.1 If we accept the notion that Nephi is perceiving this vignette as a chronological segment, then verse 1 through 3 cover the period of time of Lehi's family arrival in the promised land and the visit of the Lord Jesus Christ to his descendants after his resurrection from the dead. This would be approximately six hundred years of history encapsulated in three verses. For Nephi the scene must have been discouraging; there would be no reconciliation between himself and his brethren, no effective dialog, just mayhem and bloodshed one century after another. This is not to say that there would not be times when there would be a working relationship between the Nephites and the Lamanites at certain points during the history of their peoples. What is asserted here is that in general, they would be at each other's throats constantly while their civilizations lasted

12.1.12—*Look*—Almost all of the separate instructional vignettes are introduced by this and similar words. In some respects, this use of the word "Look!" is like unto the typical use of the word "Hearken!" There is more than mere observation that is being commanded. "Look and comprehend!" is more of the attitude expected, just as "Hearken!" means to "Listen and obey!"

12.1.36—*multitudes*—The angel proposed to show Nephi his posterity and that of his brethren. While some scholars suggest that the history contained in the Book of Mormon is somewhat limited in its geographical scope, it is clear that the genetic effect of Lehi's family has been far more extensive than many have been willing to accept. That there have been occasional incursions by other groups (like the Mulekites, for a single example), the primary ancestors for the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas for the past 2,600 years have been Nephi and his brethren.

12.2 There is hardly an author within the pages of the Book of Mormon who in tendering his history who has not testified of the great conflicts between the Nephites and the Lamanites in his day. One of the major tensions of the synopsis which the prophet Mormon made in his narrative is that, except for a few short years, the two nations conducted a battle royal for nearly one thousand years. Certainly, before the visit of the Savior to the Nephites at Bountiful, there was little respite for any of the children of Lehi.

12.3 The colonization of the Americas by the posterity of Lehi was enormous, notwithstanding the seemingly narrow geographical confines in which the running narrative of the Book of Mormon takes places. A thorough examination of the text reveals that many of the Lamanites and Nephites traveled great distances from the place of their original inheritance. This was particularly true of the Lamanites who eventually became far more numerous than the Nephites. Since Mormon's narrative is based on Nephite records rather

{Chapter III, continued}
(Chapter 12)

{¶—1830}

1 AND it came to pass that the angel said unto me: Look, and behold thy seed, and also the seed of thy brethren. And I looked and beheld the land of promise; and I beheld multitudes of people, yea, even as it were in number as many as the sand of the sea.

1 Ne. 12
AF 252
JC 46, 51
EM 1: 57, 142,
146, 184
EM 2:748, 827
EM 3:1003,
1004
1 Ne. 12:1–10
DNTPC 3:548

{¶—1830}

2 And it came to pass that I beheld multitudes gathered together to battle, one against the other; and I beheld wars, and rumors of wars, and great slaughters with the sword among my people.

1 Ne. 12:2
CR02-O 16

{¶—1830}

3 And it came to pass that I beheld many generations pass away, after the manner of wars and contentions in the land; and I beheld many cities, yea, even that I did not number them.

than those of the Lamanites, it is easily to perceive how the geographical limitations placed upon the narrative of the Book of Mormon came to be.

12.4 A horrific scene to be sure, and one previewed in some detail six hundred years before it came to pass.

- 12.4.10–12—*mist of darkness*—A grievous condition that lasted for three days (see 3 NE-C 8.3, 19–23).
- 12.4.24—*lightnings*—These were outside any previous experienced by the Nephites in the land at the time which apparently caused the city of Zarahemla to take fire (see 3 NE-C 8.7–8).
- 12.4.28—*thunderings*—The thunderings were sufficient to shake the earth itself as if it would fall apart; a powerful storm indeed (see 3 NE-C 8.6).
- 12.4.30—*earthquakes*—This was one that continued interminably in the minds and hearts of those who experienced it. It lasted for more than three hours (see 3 NE-C 8.19).
- 12.4.35–36—*tumultuous noises*—Caused by the earthquakes, the fierce thunderings, and the great whirlwinds that swept across the lands. These apparently continued for three days (see 3 NE-C 10.9–10).
- 12.4.47—*rent*—The whole face of the land was deformed, fragmented by seams and cracks (see 3 NE-C 8.18).
- 12.4.51—*mountains*—Mountains fell to the earth and others were raised up. Moronihah was buried by a new mountain (see 3 NE-C 8.10 and 3 NE-C 9.5).
- 12.4.59—*plains*—Samuel the Lamanite testified of this extraordinary occurrence as well, indicating that all of the land had apparently been a solid mass before the natural tribulation (see HE-C 14.21–22 and 3 NE-C 8.13).
- 12.4.76—*sunk*—Some cities were sunk into the sea, like Moroni (see 3 NE-C 8.9), together with Onihah, Mocum, and Jerusalem (see 3 NE 9.7). Others were buried in the earth like Moronihah (see 3 NE-C 8.10), together with Gadiandi, Jacob, and Gim gimno (see 3 NE-C 9.8).
- 12.4.84—*burned*—The city of Zarahemla was burned by fire, perhaps as a result of the great lightnings which were produced by the storm (see 3 NE-C 6–8). So also were consumed the cities of Jacobugath, Laman, Josh, Gad, and Kishkumen (see 3 NE-C 9.9–10).
- 12.4.93—*tumbled*—The writers who preserved the history of those tragic times prior to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to visit the Nephites testified that many cities were brought to destruction and near destruction by the shaking of the earth (see 3 NE-C 8.14–15).

12.5 After three days, the mists of darkness did evaporate from the face of the land (see 3 NE-C 10.9). At the temple in Bountiful a great multitude had gathered, receiving the Lord Jesus Christ at his first appearance among the Nephites (see 3 NE-C 11.1). The numerical value of the “multitude at that time is revealed at the end of that first visit as two thousand five hundred souls (see 3 NE 17.25). The next day a far greater number were assembled (see 3 NE-C 19.1–5), a second multitude that was divided into twelve bodies so great were their number. Might we speculate that if the Savior could easily deal with 2,500 people, that the twelve bodies may have amounted to a total of 30,000 souls or so? Undoubtedly there were many others who, because of distance and circumstances, were not able to gather to the city of Bountiful.

12.6 In the first appearance, Jesus descended out of heaven to appear unto the

{¶—1830}

4 And it came to pass that I saw a mist of darkness on the face of the land of promise; and I saw lightnings, and I heard thunderings, and earthquakes, and all manner of tumultuous *noises; and I saw the earth and the rocks, that they rent; and I saw mountains tumbling into pieces; and I saw the plains of the earth, that they were broken up; and I saw many cities that they were sunk; and I saw many that they were burned with fire; and I saw many that did tumble to the earth, because of the quaking thereof.

{¶—1830}

5 And it came to pass after I saw these things, I saw the vapor of darkness, that it passed from off the face of the earth; and behold, I saw multitudes who had not fallen because of the great and terrible judgments of the Lord.

6 And I saw the heavens open,

1 Ne. 12:4
DNTC 1:831
1 Ne. 12:4–6
PM 539
* p. 27

1 Ne. 12:6

twenty-five hundred who were gathered at the Temple. On the second occasion, angels descended out of heaven to minister unto the disciples, during which Jesus appeared to them all. The narrator does not explicitly say that Jesus descended out of heaven with the angels, but that might be assumed.

12.6.9–11—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

12.7 Nephi the son of Nephi the son of Helaman was the first to be baptized, and he in turn baptized the other eleven Apostles whom Jesus had called and ordained to minister to the inhabitants of the western hemisphere. Upon being baptized, the Holy Ghost fell upon them all and they were encircled about with fire and angels attended them (see *3 NE 19.11–14*).

12.8 Nephi is shown the bearers of the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God, who would hold the keys of salvation and exaltation for all of the descendants of Nephi and his brethren. It is likely that Lehi had seen these same men in vision (see 1.9–10) inasmuch as he would have had a vested interest in the powers of the priesthood exercised among his posterity.

12.9 There is a distinction made between the disciples the Lord called in Palestine and those whom he called from among the Nephites. Though the first are called “apostles” and the second are called “disciples” we ought not to conclude that the Nephite disciples were endowed with any less authority than those who served with Jesus during his mortal ministry. Because of the distance and physical obstacles that lay between the various bodies of saints, it seems unlikely that any of the Palestine Twelve ever made the journey to be with the Nephites. Therefore, there must have been a provision made so that all of the blessings that could come to the inhabitants of the eastern hemisphere would be available to those of the western. It is likely that Jesus established additional quorums of disciples as he visited the other “sheep” which were not of the fold of the Jews or the fold of the Nephites so that they, too, might have the same opportunities as the other “flocks” had obtained.

12.9.10—*apostles*—The Greek roots from which the term “apostles” derives originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

12.9.25—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

12.10 Notwithstanding the similarity of authority, there were clear distinctions made in the nature of the responsibilities of the two bodies of apostolic authority. Those who had served as Apostles during the mortal ministry of

and the Lamb of God descending out of heaven; and he came down and showed himself unto them.

7 And I also saw and bear record that the Holy Ghost fell upon twelve others; and they were ordained of God, and chosen.

{*9—1830*}

8 And the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold the twelve disciples of the Lamb, who are chosen to minister unto thy seed.

9 And he said unto me: Thou rememberest the twelve apostles of the Lamb? Behold they are they who shall judge the twelve tribes of Israel; wherefore, the twelve ministers of thy seed shall be judged of them; for ye are of the house of Israel.

10 And these twelve ministers whom thou beholdest shall judge thy seed. And, behold, they are

AF 387
JC 725
1 Ne. 12:6–7
MF 313

1 Ne. 12:7–10
PM 522
EM 1:203

1 Ne. 12:8
MF 313
1 Ne. 12:8–10
MA 156
AGQ 1:121
DS 3:158
1 Ne. 12:9
JC 738
MF 313
EM 2:705, 731
1 Ne. 12:9–10
MD 399
DNTC 1:558
DNTC 3:572
JC 788
EM 1:61
EM 2:774

1 Ne. 12:10
MD 304
DS 1:133

Jesus would have the responsibility of conducting the judgment of the entire House of Israel. The Nephite Twelve would have the task of judging the descendants of Nephi and his brethren. Whether we are brought before the God of Heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, the original Twelve selected from among the Jews, the Nephite Twelve, or any others who might be given the task of calling the children of men to eternal account, any and all of those so employed would be filled with the honor, glory, and righteousness of deity. What one would determine would be precisely the same as any of the others, because they are all unified in heart and mind with the principles of light and truth.

12.10.26–28—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

12.11 This, of course, represents the eternal effect of approximately 170 years of harmonious unity, a society like unto that which existed in the city of Enoch, and similar to that which will exist during the thousand years when Jesus and his saints will rule upon the earth. Children will be born and raised in righteousness, fill with light and truth, devoid of any desire to sin against God, man, or themselves. All peace, harmony, and happiness derives from faithful adherence to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that which may formally bring every man, woman, and child unto salvation and perfection in the Celestial Kingdom of God. The atoning sacrifice of Jesus of Nazareth, his expiation for the sins of mankind and his resurrection from the tomb, is the only means whereby man can be saved.

12.11.7—*Look!*—Almost all of the separate instructional vignettes are introduced by this and similar words. In some respects, this use of the word “Look!” is like unto the typical use of the word “Hearken!” There is more than mere observation that is being commanded. “Look and comprehend!” is more of the attitude expected, just as “Hearken!” means to “Listen and obey!”

12.11.28–30—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

12.12 During the fourth generation, a period of time beginning some two hundred years after the birth of the Savior had been heralded to the world by many signs and wonders, the fabric of that ideal society began to be unraveled by pride, greed, and the honors of men (see *4 NE-C 1.24–26*).

12.12.3—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

12.13 In the context of the vision Nephi is having, the “multitudes” here are, for the most part, the direct descendants of Nephi and his brethren. We also ought to understand the “earth” to mean those portions of the Americas which had been colonized by the Nephites and the Lamanites.

12.14 The vision of those seemingly numberless concourses of posterity must have at first pleased and then horrified Nephi, as they all fell into ruin,

righteous forever; for because of their faith in the Lamb of God their garments are made white in his blood.

{*¶*—1830}

11 And the angel said unto me: Look! And I looked, and beheld three generations pass away in righteousness; and their garments were white even like unto the Lamb of God. And the angel said unto me: These are made white in the blood of the Lamb, because of their faith in him.

12 And I, Nephi, also saw many of the fourth generation who passed away in righteousness.

{*¶*—1830}

13 And it came to pass that I saw the multitudes of the earth gathered together.

14 And the angel said unto me: Behold thy seed, and also the seed

MF 313
PM 251
MM 2:102

1 Ne. 12:11
MA 53
MD 429
DNTC 3:472
1 Ne. 12:11–12
MD 310
DNTC 3:548

1 Ne. 12:13–23
DNTC 3:549
1 Ne. 12:15–19
EM 1:57

particularly as he watched them succumb to one wicked perversion after another until they were completely destroyed.

12.15 Although the Lamanites and the Nephites had been doing battle against one another for centuries (see 12.1–3), it must have been made clear to Nephi that what he was now watching was to be the final military conflict between good and evil among the posterity of his father.

12.16 As part of the interpretation of Lehi’s Dream, the angel pointed out the three main elements which would prove destructive to Nephi’s posterity. The first was anger and the desire for revenge. The fountain of filthy waters was in opposition to the Tree of Life. As the Tree represented the Love of God, the fountain represented the Hatred of Satan which was the motivating force behind all of the conflicts between the posterity of Laman and Nephi. The devil stirs up the hearts of men to anger one against another, producing only bitterness, sorrow, and enmity. Hell is filled with weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, a state of mind that flows from injured pride. War between nations is personal vendetta writ large. The Nephites frequently took up arms against their enemies as a result of their desire to “right” some “wrong”, rather than to protect their families and religion. This was particularly true near the end of their nation. Mormon would refuse to lead them into battle because of their vicious and diabolical approach to warfare. One imagines multitudes of people jumping into the fountain where they were drowned (see 8.32).

12.17 The second element of the Dream that served as a warning to Nephi and his posterity was their forgetfulness, together with the ease with which they were led away from the straight and narrow path leading to the Tree of Life. In terms of the Vision, had the posterity of Nephi hung on to the Rod of Iron in their progress toward the Tree of Life, the temptations of the devil would have only been a momentary concern, an inconvenient darkness through which they would have sojourned for a time. Instead, because they ignored their attendance to the Rod while they enjoyed the full light of day, when the mists of darkness came, they wandered away from the path that led to eternal life. To continue the analogy a little further, if men would familiarize themselves with the Word of God while they can plainly see and hear what the prophets, seers, and revelators are communicating to them, in those moments of temptation which invariably come, they can clearly remember in the darkness what they have seen and read in the light. Blindly wandering about in the dark might lead one to dangerous precipices, at the bottom of which flows a noisome river.

12.18 The third element of the Vision, which should concern all those who are familiar with it, was the Great and Spacious Building. While a goodly number of the posterity of Lehi would make their way to the building without even considering the possibility of entering into the path, many of Nephi’s posterity would be affected adversely because of the mockery of their brethren who were already in the building. The tragedy was that those who were nominally agitated by the scorn of the “wise” were those who had already partaken of the fruit and later became ashamed. Lehi says in his version of the Dream that these fell away into forbidden paths and were lost (see 8.28). In

of thy brethren.

15 And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the people of my seed gathered together in multitudes against the seed of my brethren; and they were gathered together to battle.

{~~9~~—1830}

16 And the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold the fountain of filthy water which thy father saw; yea, even the river of which he spake; and the depths thereof are the depths of hell.

17 And the mists of darkness are the temptations of the devil, which blindeth the eyes, and hardeneth the hearts of the children of men, and leadeth them away into broad roads, that *they perish and are lost.

18 And the large and spacious building, which thy father saw, is vain imaginations and the pride of the children of men. And a great and a terrible gulf divideth them; yea, even the word of the justice of the Eternal God, and the Messiah who is the Lamb of God, of whom the Holy Ghost beareth record,

1 Ne. 12:16
EM 1:188

1 Ne. 12:17
DNTC 3:362
CR82-A 36
CR92-A 91
CR96-A 105
CR02-A 83
CR02-O 56
* p. 28

1 Ne. 12:18
AF 169
MD 489
PM 76
EM 2:892
CR02-A 74

terms of the imagery of the Vision, one wonders whether some of these paths led to the brink of the great gulf, particularly if those who were taking these strange paths were intent on getting to the Great and Spacious Building. These, too, would have fallen into the depths of hell

12.18.12–13—*vain imaginations*—Earlier in Nephi’s experience with his father’s dream, the angel pointed out that the building represented the “wisdom” of the world (see 11.35). When men do not understand the truth and are unwilling to go through the process of righteously acquiring that truth, they attempt to satisfy themselves by making up answers to their erstwhile questions, attempting to nourish themselves on the fried froth of their own thinking.

12.18.44—*Messiah*—A Hebrew word meaning the “Anointed One”. Translated into Greek, this phrase becomes, in its anglicized form, “Christ”.

12.18.48–50—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

12.19 By definition, the “descendants” of Nephi were all those who followed after righteousness, who had before them the writings of the prophets, seers, and revelators and hearkened to the voices thereof. In the end, the Nephites would be completely destroyed. That is to say, that those who had been primarily righteous would turn away from the truth and succumb to their wicked brethren because of shame, injured pride, and the pleasures of the world. That is the burden of the narrative of the Book of Mormon.

12.20 The final destruction of the Nephite civilization took place at the Hill Cumorah in the year AD 385 (see *MM-C 6.5*). After which great wars among the Lamanites continued, primarily between the Lamanites and the Gadianton robbers (see *MM-C 8.6–9*). By AD 400 only Mormon’s son, Moroni, remained of the Nephite people, the only righteous mortal left who had participated in the final conflict.

12.21 Twenty-one years later, in AD 421, Moroni bade farewell to his readers, testifying that the Lamanites had continued to battle one another, an entire generation dedicated to bloodshed (see *MR-C 1.1–3*). According to Nephi, many such generations followed one another with the same kind of destructive ferocity. What little we know of the history of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas since the fifth century AD testifies to the truth of Nephi’s prophecy.

12.22 When contemplating the relative understanding and faith of the Lamanites and Nephites, we generally credit the latter with far greater perspicuity than the former. It is clear, however, that even at the time of the final battle at the Hill Cumorah, the Lamanites were possessed of “beliefs” from which they could “dwindle”. Had the Lamanites been adhering to anything that might have approached Christianity? Could their “dwindling” have included a progressive loss of knowledge concerning their origins? By the time the Europeans arrived on the shores of the Americas some ten centuries after the destruction of the Nephites, there were but faint vestiges left of the vast

from the beginning of the world until this time, and from this time henceforth and forever.

19 And while the angel spake these words, I beheld and saw that the seed of my brethren did contend against my seed, according to the word of the angel; and because of the pride of my seed, and the temptations of the devil, I beheld that the seed of my brethren did overpower the people of my seed.

{~~¶~~—1830}

20 And it came to pass that I beheld, and saw the people of the seed of my brethren that they had overcome my seed; and they went forth in multitudes upon the face of the land.

21 And I saw them gathered together in multitudes; and I saw wars and rumors of wars among them; and in wars and rumors of wars I saw many generations pass away.

22 And the angel said unto me: Behold these shall dwindle in unbelief.

1 Ne. 12:19–20
EM 1:156

1 Ne. 12:22–23
MLM 208

understanding which the children of Lehi once possessed.

12.23 The products of apostasy are grim indeed. Succumbing to the spirit of murder and mayhem reduces a people to the basest form of carnal and sensual man. They lose sight of that which is holy. They fall into an abyss of ignorance and self-degradation from which they cannot easily extricate themselves. They invariably pass through abject sorrow and unrelenting misery. Eventually, they devalue all forms of life including their own.

12.23.18—*dark*—As much a reference to their benighted minds and hearts as a reference to the color of their skin. The later is primarily a product of heredity; the former a product of apostasy.

12.23.20—*loathsome*—In the history of the English language, the words “loath” and “loth” are essentially the same, the former generally reserved for the emotion expressed towards others, and the latter descriptive of one’s attitude towards oneself. Were the Lamanites “loathsome” to the Nephites? Frequently. Were the Lamanites “loathsome” to themselves? Undoubtedly that was the major anguish that perpetuated the wars among themselves after the destruction of the Nephites.

12.23.23—*filthy*—As the Lamanites descended into barbarism, their personal hygiene may have suffered. Spiritually, however, they were unrepentant and remained in their sins, without the cleansing effects of the Atonement of Christ in their lives.

12.23.27—*idleness*—As much as some erstwhile theologians would like it, there is no linguistic connection between the words “idle” and “idol”. The first derives from Germanic sources and the second from Latin. That the Lamanites became idolaters is a matter of historical record, but that was not the source of their “idleness”. To be “idle” is to do things that are “vain, empty, void, worthless”. Their apostasy and willful disobedience to the principles of the Gospel brought them to a state that their mortal experience was doing little to benefit them in their eternal progress.

12.23.32—*abominations*—“Abomination”, in the scriptural sense, refers to that which leads one to death, both physical and spiritual

{*¶—1830*}

23 And it came to pass that I beheld, after they had dwindled in unbelief they became a dark, and loathsome, and a filthy people, full of idleness and all manner of abominations.

{Chapter III, continued}
(Chapter 13)

{*¶—1830*}

13.1 If the narrative given by Nephi and the angel here is chronological sequential, which we have every reason to conclude that it is, the period of time spoken of is approximately the same time as the destruction of the Nephite nation which was described in the preceding chapter, or about AD 385. It is also probable that the angel has left off helping Nephi understand the meaning of the Vision of the Tree of Life, inasmuch as there will be no more references to the specific elements of Lehi’s Dream mentioned from this point on.

13.1.13—*Look!*—Almost all of the separate instructional vignettes are introduced by this and similar words. In some respects, this use of the word “Look!” is like unto the typical use of the word “Hearken!” There is more than mere observation that is being commanded. “Look and comprehend!” is more of the attitude expected, just as “Hearken!” means to “Listen and obey!”

1 AND it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, saying: Look! And I looked and beheld many nations and kingdoms.

1 Ne. 13
AF 252
MD 82, 104,
194, 292, 311,
383, 422, 429,
453
DNTC 1:123,
294, 625
DNTC 3:381,
472
DS 2:248
JC 46
PM 142, 305
MM 1:313

13.2 At the heart of the matter of this part of Nephi’s instruction is how the descendants of his brethren, the Lamanites, could ever be restored to the fullness of the Gospel which had been promised to them by Father Lehi. It is essentially the same question raised by Jacob as to how the Jews could ever be redeemed inasmuch as they had completely rejected Jesus as the Christ (see *JC-C 4.16–18*). Jacob tells the allegory of Zenos as the answer to that question. Perhaps we ought to consider that this allegory has bearing on the nature and direction that the angel’s teachings.

13.3 After Lehi relates his version of the Dream, Laman and Lemuel come to Nephi in order to ask him pertinent question regarding that Vision of the Tree of Life His responses are direct and concise (see 16.21–36). What is intriguing is that Laman and Lemuel’s first series of questions have to do with the allegory of Zenos, that having to do with the tame and wild olive trees (see 16.7–20). Nephi ably answers both sets of questions. The tame olive tree represents the House of Israel and the wild olive tree represents the nations of the Gentiles.

13.3.14—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.4 It is extremely difficult to read this particular passage of scripture without thinking of a specific religious institution. It seems almost certain that this church was to appear among those kingdoms and nations which could be clearly denominated Greco-Roman.

13.4.14—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.4.16—*formation*—Until 1981, many of the editions of the Book of Mormon printed in England and in the United States have employed the word “foundation” in the place of “formation” (see 13.5 and 13.26). In the Nauvoo editions of the Book of Mormon, the publication of which the Prophet Joseph Smith supervised directly, the word “formation” was substituted to clarify the text. It is with reference to these later editions that the current reading is given. It is interesting to note that in 13.32, in the first edition of the Book of Mormon, the word “formation” was used in essentially the same setting. We may only speculate, but it seems certain that when the Prophet was confronted with the two words used in conjunction with the rise of the great and abominable church, that he was inspired to chose “formation” over “foundation”. Although many have proffered their opinions as to what we ought to understand by the changes and how they affect

2 And the angel said unto me: What beholdest thou? And I said: I behold many nations and kingdoms.

3 And he said unto me: These are the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles.

{9—1830}

4 And it came to pass that I saw among the nations of the Gentiles the formation of a great church.

EM 1: 57, 142,
146, 184, 204
EM 2:748, 827
EM 3:1003,
1004
CR87-A 33
1 Ne. 13:1–3
DNTC 3:549
1 Ne. 13:1–9
MLM 52
1 Ne. 13:1–10
MD 138
1 Ne. 13:1–19
MD 717
1 Ne. 13:1–34
DS 1:175

1 Ne. 13:4–5
MLM 439
1 Ne. 13:4–8
DNTC 3:550
1 Ne. 13:4–9
DNTC 3:549
1 Ne. 13:4–9, 26–
27, 34
EM 2:568

the theology of the Church of Christ in this dispensation, yet the changes are far more likely to be a matter of disambiguating terminology that might otherwise be overanalyzed.

13.4.20—*church*—The primary meanings of the word “church” in English have to do with a specific building or location where worship takes place. The secondary meanings have to do with the organization of believers, the association, formal or informal, which is defined by a system of principles and ordinances.

13.5 The devil is the founder of this church that persecutes the faithful, the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Satan is at enmity against all those who honor the Father and the Son. The bitterness of Lucifer, his foiled pride and vanity, has maddened him to the point that he will lash out at any who oppose him. He is merciless in all of his dealings with those who have obtained their second estate. His greatest achievement here upon the earth has been to turn the hearts of those who were once brethren against each other, using the trifles of this fallen world to inspire them. Hence, the vicious harlots, the distinction of wealth, and the honors of self-congratulation.

13.5.24—*saints*—In reference to the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ, those who have covenanted to no longer partake of the wickedness of the world. The Greek word used here means “those not of the earth”.

13.6 The characteristics of the church that persecutes the saints of God are essentially those which are exhibited by one who has failed to resist the fundamental temptations that Lucifer put to the Savior while the later was communing with his Father while in the wilderness. Jesus was tempted to turn stone into bread in order to satisfy his hunger. He was promised all of the finery and wealth of the world if he would forsake the truth. He was tempted to leap from the pinnacle of the Temple at Jerusalem before the multitudes who had gathered there to worship. The church’s desire for harlots constitutes an acceptance of carnality, and a lust for self-gratification of all kinds. The penchant for precious metals and fine clothing corresponds to the need for carnal security, inasmuch as there is no ability to sense spiritual security. The honors of men will drive the spiritually bankrupt to betray those closest to them, even that which is most noble and good. All of this because men reject the voice of God and that of His servants.

13.6.10—*great*—This adjective includes a number of semantic values. “Great” may have to do with dimensions, distance, number, and degree. It also may refer to the importance of a thing, its principal position or rank. It is used to express presumed dignity, generosity, magnanimity, sumptuousness, sublimity, and nobility. Pride, pregnancy, difficulty, intimacy, and consanguinity may also be implied.

13.6.12—*abominable*—The literal meaning of the roots of the word “abominable” is “departing from the omen”. That is to say, an “abomination” is something that has divorced itself from prophecy, seership, and divine revelation of any kind. For that reason, an abominable church would array itself against any and all peoples who professed communication with God.

13.6.22—*founder*—The articulation of the temptations associated with apostasy may be attributed to the lips of Satan.

13.7 It is clear that the posterity of Lehi were not the only ones who had been caught up in the carnal appeal of the great and spacious building (see 8.26–27).

5 And the angel said unto me: Behold the formation of a church which is most abominable above all other churches, which slayeth the saints of God, yea, and tortureth them and bindeth them down, and yoketh them with a yoke of iron, and bringeth them down into captivity.

{9—1830}

6 And it came to pass that I beheld this great and abominable church; and I saw the devil that he was the founder of it.

7 And I also saw gold, and silver, and silks, and scarlets, and fine-

1 Ne. 13:5
AF 203
MD 733
PM 34
MM 1:31
CR88-O 8
1 Ne. 13:5–9
DNTC 3:554
1 Ne. 13:5,9
EM 1:270

1 Ne. 13:6
MD 194
EM 2:568
1 Ne. 13:6–8
MD 343
MLM 438

1 Ne. 13:7–8
DNTC 3:79,

<p>13.7.11—<i>scarlets</i>—A red or crimson color which is often associated with wealth, nobility, and gross immorality, a particularly apt word given the context in which the word is used here.</p> <p>13.7.13–14—<i>fine-twined</i>—“Twining” has to do with the process of weaving cloth. Obviously, “fine-twined” cloth would be of exceptional quality. Tightly woven and therefore comfortable to wear.</p> <p>13.7.14—<i>linen</i>—A cloth woven from the silky bast fibers of the flax plant.</p> <p>13.7.25—<i>harlots</i>—Originally, a “harlot” was a rogue, a vagabond, or a knave. It has come to refer specifically to a woman who has sold her sexual favors for gain.</p>	<p>twined linen, and all manner of precious clothing; and I saw many harlots.</p>	<p>553</p>
<p>13.8 One might do well to reconsider one’s own material and spiritual priorities given the consequences of misguided choices while in this fallen world.</p> <p>13.8.19—<i>scarlets</i>—A red or crimson color which is often associated with wealth, nobility, and gross immorality, a particularly apt word given the context in which the word is used here.</p> <p>13.8.22–23—<i>fine-twined</i>—“Twining” has to do with the process of weaving cloth. Obviously, “fine-twined” cloth would be of exceptional quality. Tightly woven and therefore comfortable to wear.</p> <p>13.8.24—<i>linen</i>—A cloth woven from the silky bast fibers of the flax plant.</p> <p>13.8.31—<i>harlots</i>—Originally, a “harlot” was a rogue, a vagabond, or a knave. It has come to refer specifically to a woman who has sold her sexual favors for gain.</p>	<p>8 And the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold the gold, and the silver, and the silks, and the scarlets, and the fine-twined linen, and the precious clothing, and the harlots, are the desires of this great and abominable church.</p>	<p>1 Ne. 13:8 MD 341</p>
<p>13.9 Those who have succumbed to the wiles of the devil drink from the same cup of bitterness as their master. They take joy in the misery of others, not content with their own sorrow and grief. The wicked proactively attempt to seduce the innocent by every means at their command. The righteous they both fear and despise, and will have them out of their sight by any means, including corruption and homicide. This is most clearly manifested today in child abuse, pornography, and violence toward the innocent.</p> <p>13.9.13—<i>saints</i>—In reference to the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ, those who have covenanted to no longer partake of the wickedness of the world. The Greek word used here means “those not of the earth”.</p>	<p>*9 And also for the praise of the world do they destroy the saints of God, and bring them down into captivity.</p>	<p>* p. 29 1 Ne. 13:9 MLM 439</p>
<p>13.10 Lehi’s family, in their flight from Jerusalem to the land of their inheritance, crossed many waters. In navigating the vastness of the ocean they traveled from east to west, traversing the Indian and Pacific Oceans in the process. It is clear, however, that in his vision, Nephi also becomes aware of the great waters which lay to the east of the land of promise, west of the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles, and that which we call today the Atlantic Ocean. Although the continents of North and South America are vast in their proportions, yet Nephi and his posterity would always conceive of themselves as dwelling upon “isles of the sea” (see <i>2 NE-C 10.20</i>).</p> <p>13.10.17—<i>Gentiles</i>—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.</p>	<p>{<i>9—1830</i>}</p> <p>10 And it came to pass that I looked and beheld many waters; and they divided the Gentiles from the seed of my brethren.</p>	<p>1 Ne. 13:10–11 DS 1:53 1 Ne. 13:10–13 JC 755, 757 1 Ne. 13:10–19 DNTC 3:550</p>

13.11 The wrath of God has been poured out upon peoples because of their wanton disobedience to the principles of eternal life. If the wrath of God is upon you, you cannot possibly prevail against your enemies. Therefore, the wrath of God being against the Lamanites meant that the Gentiles would, without question, overwhelm them in the lands of their inheritance.

13.12 Who can doubt that the man referred to here by Nephi, as the representative from among the Gentiles who crossed the “many waters” to encounter the descendants of Laman and Lemuel, was none other than Christopher Columbus? Much has been written by and about the great mariner, but undoubtedly the most astounding of all is the vision and prophecy of Nephi more than two thousand years before Columbus set sail from Palos, Spain for the New World.

13.12.10—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.12.28–30—*Spirit of God*—Again, it is a matter of historical record that Columbus felt that he was inspired and guide by the Holy Ghost to do all that he did in bringing the Americas to the knowledge of the Europeans. We ought not to be distressed at the revisionist historians when their vitriolic attacks on revelation and divine intervention in these matters muddy the testimony of good men; we ought not be surprised to find that these revisionists are card-carrying members of the great and abominable church.

13.13 The exploration and colonization of the western hemisphere by the Europeans has been well-documented. Concern over the timing and order of the European contacts with the ancient inhabitants of the Americas is unwarranted. What is important here is that Europeans came to the Americas as a result of having been inspired to do so, as part of an attempt to escape persecution and bondage of one sort or another.

13.13.18—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.14 The posterity of Lehi could be found in every part of the promised land, throughout all of North and South America when the Europeans first began their exploration and colonization of the western hemisphere. The French and English predominated in the north and the Spanish and Portuguese in the south. The subjugation of the indigenous peoples of the Americas was swift and merciless whenever the notion struck, when the Europeans felt there was something to be gained by doing so. Without the strength of the Lord God of

11 And it came to pass that the angel said unto me: Behold the wrath of God is upon the seed of thy brethren.

12 And I looked and beheld a man among the Gentiles, who was separated from the seed of my brethren by the many waters; and I beheld the Spirit of God, that it 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.

{*¶*—1830}

13 And it came to pass that I beheld the Spirit of God, that it wrought upon other Gentiles; and they went forth out of captivity, upon the many waters.

{*¶*—1830}

14 And it came to pass that I beheld many multitudes of the Gentiles upon the land of promise; and I beheld the wrath of God, that it was upon the seed of my brethren; and they were scattered before the Gentiles and were smitten.

1 Ne. 13:11
MLM 208
1 Ne. 13:11–14
AF 320

1 Ne. 13:12
AF 159
EM 1:295
EM 4:1495
CR92-O 73
1 Ne. 13:12–13
AF 42
EM 1:318
CR87-O 3
1 Ne. 13:12–15
EM 3:1164
1 Ne. 13:12–19
MLM 93
1 Ne. 13:12–15,
18–19
EM 1:141

1 Ne. 13:13–19
EM 4:1495

1 Ne. 13:14–15
AF 327

Israel to support them, the descendants of Lehi quickly fell into slavery or worse.

13.14.13—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.15 The fate of the Lamanites had been sealed once they willfully rejected the God of this land which is the Lord Jesus Christ. The Europeans, at least in a nominal fashion, were Christians and therefore prospered against the Lamanites. The vast majority of those who came from Europe to the Americas did so as an aspect of their religious fervor. There were others who were possessed of rather crass motives, and though but few, have seemed to have received most of the press for that time.

13.15.14—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.16 Though many have pointed to the history of the United States as the realization of Nephi’s vision of the exploration and colonization of the western hemisphere, it is clear that all of the nations of this half of the world have participated fully in the fulfillment of that magnificent prophecy. Men were raised up in each country to espouse the principles of democratic freedom and the Spirit and power of God inspired them to implement those principles in a practical and effective way.

13.16.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

13.16.12—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.17 The history of the Americas is replete with peoples who sought political and religious freedom from the nations and kingdoms of Europe. Great Britain, France, Spain, and Portugal precipitously lost vast tracts of territory to

15 And I beheld the Spirit of the Lord, that it was upon the Gentiles, and they did prosper and obtain the land for their inheritance; and I beheld that they were white, and exceedingly fair and beautiful, like unto my people before they were slain.

{~~9~~—1830}

16 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld that the Gentiles who had gone forth out of captivity did humble themselves before the Lord; and the power of the Lord was with them.

17 And I beheld that their mother Gentiles were gathered together upon the waters, and upon the land

1 Ne. 13:16
CR87-O 3
1 Ne. 13:16–19
EM 3:1164

1 Ne. 13:17–19
MD 827

their own colonists. Notwithstanding the enormous military might of those Kingdoms, they could not and did not prevail against their “children”.

13.17.7—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.18 The burgeoning American nations were supported by the hand of God as they attempted to establish an environment of justice and equality for their citizens. All of the efforts of those European potentates were to no avail, no more than the resistance of the Lamanites against the Old World colonists had been. To fight against those whom God had established is a fool’s errand.

13.19 Against all odds, every American nation who lifted up the banner of independence and freedom was successful in fending off the nations from which they had ethnically originated. We may blithely point to political machinations, military miracles, and brilliant statesmanship as the instruments by which the American colonies gained their liberty, but it was the hand of God the eternal Father who made all of these marvelous events possible.

13.19.3—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

13.19.7—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.20 The central question being addressed by this part of Nephi’s Vision is how could a people who had completely rejected the Gospel of salvation and the God of this land who is Jesus Christ, every be brought back to a point where they might become subjects of redemption (see 13.2). The records which had been kept which would have immediately revealed to the descendants of Laman and Lemuel of their religious heritage had been hidden up by Mormon and Moroni that they might be preserve. Had the Lamanites discovered the cache of historical records they would have destroyed them. The promise had been given to many of the righteous posterity of Lehi that the records would be preserved so that at a later date, the Lamanites would have the fullness of the Gospel presented to them anew. The introduction of the Bible to the indigenous inhabitants of the American continent was but one step in a series of events that would lead them to believe the truth of Heaven and their own divine destiny.

13.20.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a

also, to battle against them.

18 And I beheld that the power of God was with them, and also that the wrath of God was upon all those that were gathered together against them to battle.

19 And I, Nephi, beheld that the Gentiles that had gone out of captivity were delivered by the power of God out of the hands of all other nations.

{*1830*}

20 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld that they did prosper in the land; and I beheld a book, and it was carried forth among them.

1 Ne. 13:19
TSWK 596
CR87-O 4

1 Ne. 13:20–27
EM 1:113
1 Ne. 13:20–29
EM 3:1418
CR92-O 41
1 Ne. 13:20–36
MLM 164
1 Ne. 13:20–38
DNTC 3:550
1 Ne. 13:20–40
EM 2:959
EM 4:1570
1 Ne. 13:20–42
DNTC 1:60
EM 2:722

<p>faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.</p>		EM 3:1013
<p>13.21 Another rhetorical question, but designed to inform Nephi that what is about to be said would illuminate his mind and heart regarding the larger issue presented above.</p>	<p>21 And the angel said unto me: Knowest thou the meaning of the book?</p>	<p>1 Ne. 12:21–23 AF 252 1 Ne. 13:21–41 EM 2:764</p>
<p>13.22 Nephi might have correctly surmised the nature of the book he saw among the gentiles. He himself had been instrumental in obtaining a book for the benefit of his posterity and the posterity of his brethren when he acquired the Brass Plates from Laban. However, he does not let his speculations get in the way of revelation.</p>	<p>22 And I said unto him: I know not.</p>	
<p>13.23 The Bible is the published remnant of the record and history of the Jews. The Brass Plates had many portions in common with the Old Testament, even though it was a record initiated and maintained by descendants of Joseph, he who had been sold into Egypt by his brethren. As it will be seen, the materials contained in Old Testament account were inferior to that contained on the Brass Plates. One may wonder why that would be the case until one realizes that the Brass Plates had been unaffected by the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem and the trials and tribulations connected with the Captivity. The record on the Brass Plates was far more complete. Also, there was some deliberate degradation of the Old Testament record perpetrated by ignorant and uninspired men from the time of Ezra to the time when the book appeared among the gentiles who swarmed into the Americas from western Europe.</p>	<p>23 And he said: Behold it proceedeth out of the mouth of a Jew. And I, Nephi, beheld it; and he said unto me: The book that thou beholdest is a record of the Jews, which contains the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; and it also containeth many of the prophecies of the holy prophets; and it is a record like unto the engravings which are upon the plates of brass, save there are not so many; *nevertheless, they contain the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; wherefore, they are of great worth unto the Gentiles.</p>	<p>1 Ne. 13:23 MD 103, 454 EM 1:158 1 Ne. 13:23–26 MD 166 MM 1:273 1 Ne. 13:23–32 DS 3:191 1 Ne. 13:23–35 MD 336 * p. 30</p>
<p>13.23.13—<i>Jew</i>—Many have understandably concluded that “the Jew” spoken of was Ezra, a scribe and priest who lived during the middle of the fifth century BC. He is credited by historians and Jewish tradition as being the instrument by which the Jewish canon was established after the Babylonian Captivity. He is definitely the writer of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Some scholars attribute to Ezra the editorship of Esther, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Twelve Prophets. Ezra was, in many aspects, a man like unto Moses the Lawgiver.</p>		
<p>13.23.16—<i>Nephi</i>—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.</p>		
<p>13.23.50—<i>Israel</i>—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.</p>		
<p>12.23.62—<i>prophets</i>—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.</p>		
<p>12.23.110—<i>Gentiles</i>—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous</p>		

insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.24 If our assumption regarding Ezra the priest be correct, that he is the “Jew” spoken of from whose mouth the book came, then we might conclude that he was one of the greatest of the Lord’s prophets. Since the book, in the beginning, contained the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Ezra could have been as devout as any disciple who has ever lived. Undoubtedly he was a man like unto Jacob, the brother of Nephi, whose views of the life of Christ were so vivid that he was counted by his father, Lehi, as one whose testimony of the Savior was like unto that of the Twelve Apostles. Jacob lived more than five hundred years before the birth of Christ, Ezra nearly the same, yet they were cut from the same bolt of cloth theologically. Why Ezra’s Christianity is not more clearly stated in his writing is the subject of the next part of Nephi’s vision. The testimony of the Twelve Apostles was, in large measure, a confirmation of that which Ezra had written of the Savior and that the principles of salvation were true.

13.24.23—*Jew*—Many have understandably concluded that “the Jew” spoken of was Ezra, a scribe and priest who lived during the middle of the fifth century BC. He is credited by historians and Jewish tradition as being the instrument by which the Jewish canon was established after the Babylonian Captivity. He is definitely the writer of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Some scholars attribute to Ezra the editorship of Esther, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Twelve Prophets. Ezra was, in many aspects, a man like unto Moses the Lawgiver.

13.24.41—*gospel*—That is to say, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance from sin, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.

13.24.49—*apostles*—The Greek roots from which the term “apostles” derives originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

13.24.64–66—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

13.25 When, precisely, did the material contained in the record of the Jews become available to the gentiles? We may point to Paul and the other Apostles of his day as the ones who disseminated the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Greeks and Romans. Most scholars have concluded that those were the first instances of the Gospel having been taken from the House of Israel into the nations of the earth. However, within a century after Ezra great scriptural compilation had taken place, all that had been preserved by the priest was

{9—1830}

24 And the angel of the Lord said unto me: Thou hast beheld that the book proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew; and when it proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew it contained the fulness of the gospel of the Lord, of whom the twelve apostles bear record; and they bear record according to the truth which is in the Lamb of God.

1 Ne. 13:24–26
DS 1:22
1 Ne. 13:24–28
MLM 53
1 Ne. 13:24–29
AGQ 2:65
AGQ 3:75
EM 2:530
EM 4:1666
1 Ne. 13:24–42
MD 138
1 Ne. 13:24
CR88-A 81

25 Wherefore, these things go forth from the Jews in purity unto the Gentiles, according to the truth which is in God.

translated into Greek, the remnant of which we call today the Septuagint. Would that have constituted an early instance of the record of the Jews being made available to the Gentiles?

13.25.8—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

13.25.13—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.26 Whatever may have happened between the time of Ezra and the ministry of the Twelve Apostles, the disciples of Jesus clearly revealed the essence of the Gospel of Christ to all peoples who would hearken to their voice, regardless of their ethnicity. The implication of this verse is that the record of the Jews was still replete with much of that which constitutes the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. By using this record in their ministries, the Apostles were able to convert many thousands of the covenant people to the Church of Christ.

13.26.12—*apostles*—The Greek roots from which the term “apostles” derives originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

13.26.18—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

13.26.21—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.26.31—*church*—The formation of the great and abominable church takes place after the Apostles introduce the record of the Jews in its purity to the gentiles of their day. It is that church which destroyed the Gospel clarity of the text by removing many portions of what we would call the source of Old Testament record.

26 And after they go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the formation of that great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away.

1 Ne. 13:26
MA 11, 36
AGQ 5:181
PM 522
EM 2:568
CR88-A 81
1 Ne. 13:26–27
EM 1:142
1 Ne. 13:26–42
EM 2:845
1 Ne. 13:26,28–
29, 32, 34–35,
CR94-O 116
1 Ne. 13:26,40–
41
EM 2:731

13.26.48—*gospel*—That is to say, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance from sin, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.

13.27 The deletion of Christianity from the ancient records produced by Ezra and his associates was a deliberate act and not simply a matter of ignorance or mislaid materials through time. The antipathy between the Church of Christ and Judaism as religions led to the latter's attempt to distance themselves from the disciples of Jesus, even to the point of discarding material from their sacred record that was far too explicit regarding the Messiah and his ministry among the covenant people. The Councils held at Jamnia in AD 90 and then at Tiberias in AD 130 were undoubtedly proactive attempts to make the distinction between Jew and Christian stark enough that even a Gentile could perceive it. By this act, the leadership of the Jews enrolled themselves in the ranks of the great and abominable church of the devil. As apostasy engulfed the Primitive Church of Christ during second century AD, vying sectarian Christians disavowed many legitimate accounts of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and the Apostles and edited others which seemed spurious in their own benighted eyes. Again, all of these attempts were designed to promote or maintain power, wealth, prestige, and self-gratification.

13.28 We may easily point to the New Testament and declare that this is indeed the book of the Lamb of God. Yet, in the vision which Nephi experienced, it is the record of a Jew that is specifically called by the angel the book of the Lamb of God. In other words, there was a time when the Old Testament narrative was as clear about the coming Messiah as the New Testament is about his mortal ministry. Certainly the contents of the Book of Mormon prior to the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ would be indicative of the kind of clarity involved in that earlier unexpurgated text.

13.28.38–41—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

13.29 The Gentiles as a whole are handicapped by their understanding of the Gospel of Christ and of the teachings of the prophets because of an absence of material. Those purposeful elisions were intended to produce ambiguity, introducing confusion where there had once been clarity, apparent contradiction where there had once been textual harmony. Thus, one may perused the sixty-six books of the Bible and produce a variety of theologies which for all intents and purposes seem to agree with the narration which remains between the covers of the sacred scriptures. One need only look at the sectarian diversity within Judaism and Christianity to realize how effective Lucifer's ploy has been.

13.29.20—*Gentiles*—The Greek word "Gentiles" means "foreigners" or "strangers", and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as "Gentiles" carries with it the notion of "massing" like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

27 And all this have they done that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord, that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men.

28 Wherefore, thou seest that after the book hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, that there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God.

29 And after these plain and precious things were taken away it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles; and after it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles, yea, even across the many waters which thou hast seen with the Gentiles which have gone forth out of captivity, thou seest—because of the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the book, which were plain unto the understanding of the children of men, according to the plainness which is in the Lamb of God—because of these things which are taken away out of the gospel of the Lamb, an exceedingly great many do stumble, yea, inso-

1 Ne. 13:28–29
EM 1:107

1 Ne. 13:29
DNTC 3:550
EM 2:568
CR88-A 81
CR02-O 16
1 Ne. 13:29–42
MLM 53

13.29.90–92—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

13.29.104—*gospel*—That is to say, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance from sin, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.

13.30 Notwithstanding the fact that the European colonists are given power to divorce themselves from the Gentile nations which had sent them to the Americas, and would also be permitted to drive and scatter the posterity of Lehi, they would not be allowed to completely destroy the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas. In large measure this would come to pass because the Lord had promised Laman and Lemuel through their prophet father, Lehi, that their posterity would endure, in spite of the oppressions and tribulations which would eventually come upon them. Nephi is here assured that a remnant of his own seed would be preserved with the seed of his brethren. Certainly there were periods of time when the Lamanites and the Nephites were, for all practical purposes, one people. Nephi's children would continue as would those who pertained to the line of his brethren; they had become one blood line.

13.30.6—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.31 It must have come as a great comfort to Nephi to know that his genetic line would not fail. The fact that his posterity would be preserved through intermarriage must have produced some mixed emotions for him. In the Allegory of the Olive Tree, Zenos would testify that the preservation of the natural branches which had been planted throughout the vineyard would be saved from destruction through the grafting in of wild branches which had prospered as grafts on the original tame tree. Certainly, this infusion of the gentiles into the Americas bringing nominal Christianity to the descendants of Lehi, together with the book which had been preserved among them, would be a major stepping stone in restoring the posterity of Nephi, Laman, and Lemuel to a knowledge of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ

13.31.7—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.32 As the Gentiles would bring faith in Jesus Christ to the posterity of Lehi

much that Satan hath great power over them.

30 Nevertheless, thou beholdest that the Gentiles who have gone forth out of captivity, and have been lifted up by the power of God above all other nations, upon the face of the land which is choice above all other lands, which is the land that the Lord God hath covenanted with thy father that his seed should have for the land of their inheritance; wherefore, thou seest that the Lord God will not suffer that the Gentiles will utterly destroy the mixture of thy seed, which are among thy brethren.

31 Neither *will he suffer that the Gentiles shall destroy the seed of thy brethren.

32 Neither will the Lord God

1 Ne. 13:30
MD 33, 529
1 Ne. 13:30–31
DNTC 3:551

* p. 31

and his sons as they spread throughout the Americas, so also would the Gentiles be brought to the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the records that had been preserved and sealed up by the ancient prophets among the Nephites. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon is a partial fulfillment of that great blessing that Nephi saw would come to them. Many of the Gentiles, or their posterity, would be natural heirs of the blessings promised to Laman and Lemuel's descendants because of intermarriage with the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas.

13.32.9—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.33 It is the subjection of the Lamanites to the power of the European Gentiles that will make possible the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and other ancient records. Had the boundaries of the United States, for example, not been pushed beyond the waters of the Ohio River, how practical would the settlement of western New York have been? Had the native Americans retained in political or military power in the days of Joseph Smith, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon would have been considerably more complex than it was. No doubt the local tribes of Palmyra might have found the excavation of ancient records from what they might have considered a sacred hill would have been a serious and bitter distraction.

13.33.4–6—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

13.33.13—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.33.24—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

13.34 One of the most compelling evidences of the removal of plain and precious things from the record of the Jews is the sectarianism of both Judaism and Christianity. Divergence of opinions fostered a comparable diversity of sentiment. Religious sects have a tendency to vilify one another until one or the other is destroyed or marginalized. The Gentile Christians wished to be faithful, to walk in the light of the Gospel of Christ, but their eyes had been blinded and their hearts hardened toward one another. Because the plain and precious things of the Gospel of Christ had been excised in one fashion or

suffer that the Gentiles shall forever remain in that awful state of blindness, which thou beholdest they are in, because of the plain and most precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back by that abominable church, whose formation thou hast seen.

33 Wherefore saith the Lamb of God: I will be merciful unto the Gentiles, unto the visiting of the remnant of the house of Israel in great judgment.

{*¶*—1830}

34 And it came to pass that the angel of the Lord spake unto me, saying: Behold, saith the Lamb of God, after I have visited the remnant of the house of Israel—and this remnant of whom I speak is the seed of thy father—wherefore, after I have visited them in judg-

1 Ne. 13:34
MD 344
MLM 108
1 Ne. 13:34–35
CR88-A 81
1 Ne. 13:34–37
AF 294
1 Ne. 13:34–41

another from the record of the Jews, the Gentiles had great difficulty making their way towards salvation. They walked in the dark, oblivious to the stumbling blocks in the path that otherwise might have been easily seen and avoided. The Gentiles, in part because of the vast natural resources in the New World, became more fixated on wealth, power, and notoriety more than on the tenets of their faith. Their death-dealing among the native Americans would create vices even more horrific, vices they would practice upon the weak and humble. They would become self-indulgent, filled with pride, addicted to vain things of every hue. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon and other sacred documents would re-ensconce the principles of truth and righteousness into the hearts and minds of all those who desired to walk in the light of day. In this the Gentiles would be blessed indeed.

13.34.19–21—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

13.34.32—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

13.34.62—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.34.80—*gospel*—That is to say, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance from sin, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.

13.34.98—*harlots*—Originally, a “harlot” was a rogue, a vagabond, or a knave. It has come to refer specifically to a woman who has sold her sexual favors for gain.

13.35 Nephi is told that throughout the thousand years of the existence of the Nephite civilization, holy prophets would be raised up to teach his people the principles of salvation and exaltation. They would be commanded to preserve their ministry in the same manner that Nephi himself had. Jesus promised that one day, that he would come among Lehi’s children and leave his blessing upon them, an incident that would also be committed to writing. Thus, many of the plain and precious things which had been lost from the record of the Jews would thereby be made available to both the posterity of Lehi and the faithful among the Gentiles in the last days.

13.35.61—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-

ment, and smitten them by the hand of the Gentiles, and after the Gentiles do stumble exceedingly, because of the most plain and precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back by that abominable church, which is the mother of harlots, saith the Lamb—I will be merciful unto the Gentiles in that day, insomuch that I will bring forth unto them, in mine own power, much of my gospel, which shall be plain and precious, saith the Lamb.

35 For, behold, saith the Lamb: I will manifest myself unto thy seed, that they shall write many things which I shall minister unto them, which shall be plain and precious; and after thy seed shall be destroyed, and dwindle in unbelief, and also the seed of thy brethren, behold, these things shall be hid up, to come forth unto the Gentiles, by the gift and power of the Lamb.

EM 1:160
1 Ne. 13:34,40
CR85-O 18

1 Ne. 13:35
AGQ 3:63
1 Ne. 13:35–36
EM 2:707
1 Ne. 13:35–40
EM 3:1418
1 Ne. 13:35–42
DNTEC 3:551

Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.36 The preservation of the records of the Nephites would preserve not only a tangible evidence of an ancient civilization which flourished in the Americas, but also that the God of Israel loves and blesses all of His children no matter where they may be found. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, the gift of prophecy and revelation, coupled with the saving ordinances of the Church and Kingdom of God would bring salvation to the faithful.

13.36.8—*gospel*—That is to say, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance from sin, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.

13.37 The European Gentiles stumbled because of sectarian beliefs, divisive ambiguities which separated the erstwhile faithful rather than uniting them. With the restoration of the plain and precious things which had been lost in Judaism and early Christianity, a foundation could be laid upon which the principles of Zion might be built. Zion is a state of mind and heart in which love embraces unity. As part of the process of bringing forth the record known as the Book of Mormon, keys of the priesthood were restored by which the hearts and minds of men might be knit with the powers of heaven. Covenants of unity prospered as the Church of Christ was established. The eternity of marriage and family life were reinstated. Bonds of friendship and fellowship were strengthened. The power and influence of the Holy Ghost would facilitate all of these inspired unions.

13.37.12—*Zion*—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every righteous man and woman since the days of Adam and Eve. It is a goal worth pursuing, inasmuch as it is an attempt to restore the earth to its paradisiacal glory. From time to time there have been people who have succeeded in binding the hearts and minds of their fellow men to them through faith, hope, and charity, in the bonds of the Christian covenant. In certain instances, entire communities have been translated because of their faithfulness to the principles and ordinances that pertain to eternity. The goal of the saints of the latter days is to prepare the entire world for the restoration of the earth to its paradisiacal glory, a condition that will last for a thousand years while the Lord Jesus Christ rules and reigns upon the earth in the Church and Kingdom of God. Zion will, therefore, eventually fill the whole face of this planet.

13.38 Punishment against the wicked is designed by God the Father to be a means that will lead a recalcitrant people to an awareness of transgression, repentance and reformation, to a point where they are receptive to truth and light. The Lamanites would be smitten and subdued by the Gentiles, but then would prove to be a blessing to the children of Lehi. In their darkness and unbelief, the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas were introduced, albeit somewhat forcefully, to the principles of Christianity as the Europeans spread forth upon the face of the land. The Old and New Testaments became available to them by way of priests and missionaries who encouraged them to accept Christ over their idolatry. Most did so, many under duress.

13.38.23–25—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

13.39 That Nephi saw in vision the coming forth of the Book of Mormon to

36 And in them shall be written my gospel, saith the Lamb, and my rock and my salvation.

37 And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost; and if they endure unto the end they shall be lifted up at the last day, and shall be saved in the everlasting kingdom of the Lamb; and whoso shall publish peace, yea, tidings of great joy, how beautiful upon the mountains shall they be.

{~~9~~—1830}

38 And it came to pass that I beheld the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the book of the Lamb of God, which had proceeded forth from the mouth of the Jew, that it came forth from the Gentiles unto the remnant of the seed of my brethren.

39 And after it had come forth

1 Ne. 13:36
AGQ 1:98

1 Ne. 13:37
MLM 289
CR83-O 48
CR85-O 41
CR92-A 103
CR97-A 100

1 Ne. 13:38–39
EM 2:541

1 Ne. 13:39

the posterity of Lehi there can be no doubt. That the Book of Mormon came to the Lamanites by way of the Gentiles is also clear. Joseph Smith and his colleagues were culturally associated with the Europeans and therefore, after a fashion, Gentiles. After the organization of the Church of Christ in this dispensation, the first proselyting mission embarked upon took the Book of Mormon to the native Americans who dwelt in areas from western New York to the unorganized territories west of the Missouri River. The Book of Mormon served as a clear witness that those things which had been written in the Bible were not fanciful Jewish folktales, but the truth of God as it had been revealed through Apostles and prophets.

13.39.12—*books*—One might make a case for interpreting “books” as in reference to the various writers included in the Book of Mormon. It is most likely, however, that the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price ought to be included as well, and perhaps many other volumes of sacred writ which have not, as yet, seen the light of day.

13.39.24—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.39.45—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

13.39.61—*prophets*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

13.39.66—*apostles*—The Greek roots from which the term “apostles” derives originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

13.40 The clarity of the Book of Mormon and the other volumes which would come forth from the Gentiles would restore much of the plain and precious things which had been lost as the sacred record of the Jews passed through the hands of the great and abominable church. Note that the Bible which had heretofore been called the record of the Jews is now called the record of the Twelve Apostles. The Apostles taught their people using the records in their possession which had come from the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Israel and then added to the whole by contributing their own testimonies and experiences with God and Christ. The remnant of the record of the Jews has gone into all of the world and now those additional books are

unto them I beheld other books, which came forth by the power of the Lamb, from the Gentiles unto them, unto the convincing of the *Gentiles and the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the Jews who were scattered upon all the face of the earth, that the records of the prophets and of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are true.

{*1830*}

40 And the angel spake unto me, saying: These last records, which thou hast seen among the Gentiles, shall establish the truth of the first, which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and precious things which have been taken away from them; and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the

AF 320
AGQ 3:63
TSWK 596
EM 2:731
* p. 32
1 Ne. 13:39–40
EM 3:1282
CR85-O 18, 20
CR87-A 89, 105
1 Ne. 13:39–42
AF 295

1 Ne. 13:40
MD 677, 743
PM 237
MLM 212
EM 3:1028
CR83-O 11
CR88-O 3
CR90-O 99
CR93-A 33
CR99-A 104

following suit, having been published in dozens of languages. Tens of thousands of copies are printed annually and will continue to be printed until the entire earth and the inhabitants thereof will have had an opportunity to know the truth for themselves.

13.40.17—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

13.40.30—*apostles*—The Greek roots from which the term “apostles” derives originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

13.40.62–64—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

13.41 If Nephi did not know before that his own writings would eventually come to the posterity of his brethren and then be taken into all of the world, he is told that now. Salvation is obtained in the Lord’s fashion, in a specified order and by authority from Him. By using the records of Nephi’s posterity coupled with the record of the Twelve Apostles, a man may come to a knowledge of the truth and be established in the covenants of exaltation. That blessing is to be afforded every man, woman, and child who will have ever lived upon the earth

13.41.2—*they*—Those who must come unto Christ for salvation. The manner in which they must do so is articulated in part in the record of the Twelve Apostles. The Book of Mormon and the other books would clarify and instruct in detail in those places where the “plain and precious” things had been deleted from the record of the Apostles.

13.41.44—*apostles*—The Greek roots from which the term “apostles” derives originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

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.

41 And they must come according to the words which shall be established by the mouth of the Lamb; and the words of the Lamb shall be made known in the records of thy seed, as well as in the records of the twelve apostles of the Lamb; wherefore they both shall be established in one; for there is one God and one Shepherd over all the earth.

1 Ne. 13:40–41
MLM 172

1 Ne. 13:41
MD 328
DNTC 1:488
DNTC 3:474
MM 3:216
MM 4:306
MLM 607
EM 1:179
EM 3:1283
1 Ne. 13:41–42
DNTC 2:129
PM 178, 194
PM 508

13.42 The remnants of the House of Israel had first claim upon the teachings and companionship of the Lord Jesus Christ during his mortal ministry because of the blessings of the covenants entered into by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Thus, his ministry was concentrated primarily in Palestine. After his resurrection from the dead, he appeared to his disciples, first in Palestine and then in the Americas. We are assured that most of the scattered remnants of the House of Israel were privileged to have the personal appearance of Jesus shortly after he visited with those in Jerusalem and Bountiful. The Gentiles were then taught by the Apostles and by the Holy Ghost. In this last dispensation, the Lord chose to bring modern revelation into the world by way of nominal Gentiles and then, eventually, the Jews will be likewise blessed. Joseph Smith was the first to converse directly with Jesus; the Jews will have that experience in their moment of extremity as Jerusalem falls to her besiegers.

13.42.16—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

13.42.21—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

14.1 The cure for spiritual blindness is revelation. So long as the children of men adhere to the principles of salvation as contained in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord God will lead them along from one grace to another until they have received a fullness.

14.1.10—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

14.1.15–17—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

14.1.29—*word*—The voice of God unto his servants, living or dead. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the revelations contained in the Doctrine and Covenants and in the Pearl of Great Price, personal revelation through the power and influence of the Holt Ghost all should be

42 And the time cometh that he shall manifest himself unto all nations, both unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles; and after he has manifested himself unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles, then he shall manifest himself unto the Gentiles and also unto the Jews, and the last shall be first, and the first shall be last.

{Chapter III, continued}
(Chapter 14)

{¶—1830}

1 AND it shall come to pass, that if the Gentiles shall hearken unto the Lamb of God in that day that he shall manifest himself unto them in word, and also in power, in very deed, unto the taking away of their stumbling blocks—

1 Ne. 13:42
MD 721
DNTC 1:497,
656
DS 3:144, 259
MM 3:239
EM 2:542, 731

1 Ne. 14
AF 252
MD 194, 489
DNTC 1:294
JC 46
MM 1:313
EM 1: 57, 142,
146, 184, 186
EM 2:748, 827
EM 3:1003,
1004
1 Ne. 14:1
CR85-O 20
1 Ne. 14:1–2
EM 1:378
1 Ne. 14:1–4, 9–
17
EM 2:568
1 Ne. 14:1–7
EM 3:1013
1 Ne. 14:1–9

considered a manifestation of the mind and will of God to His children.

14.1.33—*power*—The power of God is that which creates and redeems. Men and women of whatever ethnic background can feel the power of faith and repentance in their lives through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Christ

14.1.36—*deed*—Those things which God Himself does to bless and protect His children which cannot be explained in any other terms than divine intervention.

14.1.43–44—*stumbling blocks*—That which caused the stumbling of the Gentiles was the absence of those plain and precious things which had been taken away by the great and abominable church.

14.2 One may hearken to the words of the Lamb of God for a time and then reject him through rebellion, just as those who partook willingly of the fruit of the Tree of Life and then wandered off ashamed into forbidden paths. By keeping the commandments of God, our hearts remain tender and sensitive to the whisperings of the Spirit of God. By remaining steadfast in the revealed principles of salvation and happiness, the inhabitants of the western hemisphere would be protected by the hand of God.

14.2.8–10—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

14.2.19–20—*thy father*—At first blush one might construe the words of the angel to mean that the Gentiles would receive their blessings through Father Lehi. While there might be a winsome argument to be made for that conclusion, it is likely, given the context of the entire sentence, that the angel is referring to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the patriarchal blessings which come through adoption into the House of Israel. The descendants of Lehi pertain to the tribe of Joseph and his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Vast numbers of the populations of Europe pertain to Joseph as well. The western hemisphere has been reserved for the posterity of those two sons born in Egypt. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that many of the early leaders and members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints pertained to one or the other of those great ancient families.

14.2.30—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

14.3 The river of filthy water and the fountain from which the waters ran correspond inversely to the Tree of Life and the Love of God which it represents (see 11.25). It is, therefore, a representation of Satan-inspired hatred, that which has carved out the depths of hell for the wicked. Hell is that place where men and women are weeping and wailing, and gnashing their teeth. The inhabitants thereof are miserable, filled with sorrow and regret, frustrated at their circumstances over which they no longer have any control. They no longer have the power to afflict their enemies, torment the innocent, or gratify their own selfish desires. For them there is no happiness, carnal or spiritual. They are as Lucifer, miserable forever, unless they turn unto the God of Heaven for redemption.

14.3.65–67—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic

2 And harden not their hearts against the Lamb of God, they shall be numbered among the seed of thy father; yea, they shall be numbered among the house of Israel; and they shall be a blessed people upon the promised land forever; they shall be no more brought down into captivity; and the house of Israel shall no more be confounded.

3 And that great pit, which hath been digged for them by that great and abominable church, which was founded by the devil and his children, that he might lead away the souls of men down to hell—yea, that great pit which hath been digged for the destruction of men shall be filled by those who digged it, unto their utter destruction, saith the Lamb of God; not the destruction of the soul, save it be

DNTC 3:551
1 Ne. 14:1–17
MLM 56
1 Ne. 14:1–26
DS 1:175

1 Ne. 14:3
MD 139
EM 3:1392

relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

14.4 Those who will not seek for redemption will remain in their state of condemnation, as if there had been no remission of sins through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Those who rebel, those who administer death both physical and spiritual, those who will not hearken to the voice of God and that of His servants will, in the end, find themselves in the depths of a sorrow from which they cannot be extracted, because they will not choose to be saved.

14.5 Whether one pertains to the House of Israel or not, whether of Gentile extraction or not, the key to salvation is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance from all ill-doing. The promises of the covenants of God are predicated upon obedience to the conditions of those covenants. There is no safety for any except as those conditions are met.

14.5.12—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

14.5.20—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

14.5.42—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

14.6 The Gentiles found their way to the western hemisphere because the Lord God of Israel led them through the power and influence of His Spirit. They prospered upon the land, achieving ascendancy over the posterity of Lehi because the Lord strengthened their arms that they might have success. The Gentiles who came to the Americas had a fundamental understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. So long as they hold to that standard of conduct which is demanded by that understanding, they will enjoy the blessings of heaven. Forsaking the Lamb of God through sophistry or sin will deprive them of the protection of God and they will fall before their enemies just as the Jaredites and Nephites fell before theirs.

14.6.6—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it

the casting of it into that hell which hath no end.

4 For behold, this is according to the captivity of the *devil, and also according to the justice of God, upon all those who will work wickedness and abomination before him.

{~~9~~—1830}

5 And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, Nephi, saying: Thou hast beheld that if the Gentiles repent it shall be well with them; and thou also knowest concerning the covenants of the Lord unto the house of Israel; and thou also hast heard that whoso repenteth not must perish.

6 Therefore, wo be unto the Gentiles if it so be that they harden their hearts against the Lamb of God.

* p. 33

1 Ne. 14:5
AF 118
1 Ne. 14:5–6
EM 2:706
1 Ne. 14:5–7
MD 14

has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

14.6.18–20—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

14.7 The dispensation of the Fullness of Times would be replete with miraculous manifestations of the power of God. The appearance of the Father and the Son to the boy Joseph opened a new era of personal and general revelation for the children of men upon the earth. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon by the gift and power of God, enlarging the understanding of mankind to the principles of eternity through direct intervention, stands as an irrefutable monument to the love of God and that of His Son toward the inhabitants of this planet. The restoration of the Priesthood, the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ, the bestowal of the keys of all time and eternity upon the saints of the Most High, fitly framed together as an invitation to the honest in heart to come unto Christ and receive salvation at his hand. Those who utterly refuse that offering, who war against the truth, who find delight in disobedience, who persecute the servants of God will find only bitterness and sorrow as the reward for their misspent lives upon the earth. They are turned over to the buffetings of Satan, having neither hope nor wisdom, filled with despair and unquenchable hatred for those who wished them joy and happiness in this life and riches of eternity in the next.

14.7.7–9—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

14.8 The promises of God unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob included the assurance that no matter how dire the circumstances, no matter how wildly the world raged against God and His servants, truth would prevail and they as a covenant people would survive every onslaught that the disposition of evil men could fabricate against them. Nephi saw that the great and abominable church would have great power over the hearts of the children of men, so much so that many of the unrepentant would plot against their righteous brethren.

14.8.29—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

14.9 The principle and defining point of the great and abominable church is its proposition that God does not actively communicate with His children, that there is no such thing as continuous revelation (see 13.6). Those who constitute the membership of that church are the spiritually dead, the unregenerate.

14.10 As the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was placed in the Garden of Eden as an opposition to the Tree of Life, as the Fountain of Filthy Waters stood opposite to the Fountain of Living Waters in Lehi's Dream, the whorish mother of abominations is juxtaposed to the Church of Jesus Christ, a body of believers who are faithful, filled with light and life.

14.10.20–22—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic

7 For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men; a work which shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or on the other—either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds unto their being brought down into captivity, and also into destruction, both temporally and spiritually, according to the captivity of the devil, of which I have spoken.

{*9—1830*}

8 And it came to pass that when the angel had spoken these words, he said unto me: Rememberest thou the covenants of the Father unto the house of Israel? I said unto him, Yea.

9 And it came to pass that he said unto me: Look, and behold that great and abominable church, which is the mother of abominations, whose founder is the devil.

10 And he said unto me: Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the

1 Ne. 14:7
MLM 108

1 Ne. 14:9
DNTC 3:551,
554
MLM 438
1 Ne. 14:9–10
EM 2:568
1 Ne. 14:9–17
MLM 145
1 Ne. 14:9–27
DNTC 3:491
1 Ne. 14:10
MD 828
EM 1:57

<p>relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.</p>	<p>Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth.</p>	<p>1 Ne. 14:10–11 DNTC 3:552 1 Ne. 14:10–17 MLM 441</p>
<p>14.10.52—<i>mother</i>—All of the children of this church are stillborn. She gives birth to death, spiritual insensitivity to the whisperings of the spirit. Apostasy begets apostasy.</p>		
<p>14.10.59—<i>whore</i>—The English word “whore” derives from Germanic roots which mean “adultery, sexual infidelity for hire, prostitution”. In scriptural language, the “whore” is almost always indicative of apostasy. John the Beloved refers to the whore as the mother of harlots (see <i>RE-C 17.5</i>), that her children would do no better than their mother.</p>	<p>{<i>¶</i>—1830}</p>	
<p>14.11 The similarity between Nephi’s vision and that of John the Beloved on the Isle of Patmos has been noted before. The connection is well founded and will become explicit toward the end of the present chapter. In many respects, the mother of abominations, the whore of all the earth, the apostate nations of the earth, is like unto the Olive trees in the Allegory of Zenos whose fruits have all become wild, the whole vineyard having become corrupt in every place where the truth had once been found (see <i>JA-C 5.46</i>).</p>	<p>11 And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters; and she had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people.</p>	<p>1 Ne. 14:11–12 DNTC 2:173 1 Ne. 14:11–14 DNTC 3:474</p>
<p>14.11.21—<i>waters</i>—The angel who teaches John the Revelator about the great whore of the earth testifies to the Apostle that the waters are a representation of peoples, nations, multitudes, and tongues (see <i>RE-C 17.15</i>). We may assume that the interpretation is the same here.</p>	<p>{<i>¶</i>—1830}</p>	
<p>14.12 One of the primary effects of the wickedness and abominations of the whore is that only a relative few would join themselves to the Kingdom of God on the earth, the Church of Jesus Christ. The mother of abominations created an atmosphere in which cynicism reigned supreme, where faith became an object of derision, where the power of God and the priesthood were proclaimed to be nothing more than the wild imaginations of frenzied minds. Who can be led to the teachings of the living prophets? Who can exercise sufficient faith to accept the gentle promptings of the Spirit of God? Only the humble who hearken not to the tauntings and threatenings of those who are drunken with the wine of iniquity. The wondrous blessing of the latter days, however, would be that the saints of God would be found throughout the entire world, as a leavening of righteousness to give hope and comfort to those who seek rest from the turmoil caused by the whore of all the earth.</p>	<p>12 And it came to pass that I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and its numbers were few, because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God, were also upon all the face of the earth; and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small, because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw.</p>	<p>1 Ne. 14:12 MD 306, 667 DNTC 2:527 DNTC 3:552 DS 1:308 PM 381 EM 3:1249 CR87-A 88 CR88-A 7 1 Ne. 14:12–14 CR81-O 11 1 Ne. 14:12,14 EM 1:270</p>
<p>14.12.13–15—<i>Lamb of God</i>—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.</p>	<p>{<i>¶</i>—1830}</p>	
<p>14.13 As Abraham discovered for himself, there is no true safe haven for the righteous upon this fallen earth. The children of God are pilgrims and strangers, looking for the Holy City but for the most part not finding it in this life. The children of men, deeply influenced by the vindictiveness of Satan, essentially overwhelmed by the philosophy of doubt and cynicism, partake in a continuing war, determined to destroy all that which is divinely inspired.</p>	<p>13 And it came to pass that I beheld that the great mother of abominations did gather together multitudes upon the face of *all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God.</p>	<p>1 Ne. 14:13 CR80-A 47 1 Ne. 14:13–17 DNTC 3:555 * p. 34</p>
<p>14.13.33—<i>Gentiles</i>—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous</p>		

insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

14.13.38–40—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

14.14 For all of the adversity which the enemies of righteousness are prepared to raise against the saints of the Most High, the love of God reigns supreme in the hearts and minds of those who are willing to hearken to the whisperings of the Spirit of God and abide by His counsels. Though their numbers be small, it is their adherence to the principles of truth and righteousness that gives them the strength and determination to walk in holiness before all men, as living witnesses that the commandments of the Father may be observed. As the grace of Christ descends upon the covenant people, their confidence in the atoning sacrifice of Christ burns brighter and brighter until the perfect day wherein they are redeemed from all ill and stain.

14.14.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

14.14.14–16—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

14.14.22—*saints*—In reference to the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ, those who have covenanted to no longer partake of the wickedness of the world. The Greek word used here means “those not of the earth”.

14.15 The wickedness of the world cannot stand. It will collapse of its own inordinate weight and lack of integrity. As the Lamanites continued to war against themselves after having destroyed the Nephites, so also will those who have failed in their frustrated lust to destroy the saints of God turn upon one another until they are consumed. Satan quickly drags his willing accomplices down to hell. The nations of the earth having been subjected to the power of the whore of all the earth, cannot find happiness, but will descend deeper and deeper into that lake of fire and brimstone which is hatred, anger, and sorrow.

14.16 The wars upon the earth between the nations are echoes of that great war which began in heaven before the foundations of the earth were laid. The manner of waging warfare has changed somewhat, but the issues are essentially the same. Who will reign in eternity and by what means?

14.16.39—*harlots*—Originally, a “harlot” was a rogue, a vagabond, or a knave. It has come to refer specifically to a woman who has sold her sexual favors for gain.

14.17 If we assume that the promises and covenants made to the posterity of Jacob are essentially the same as those promised to Abraham and Isaac, then there are specific inherited blessings which would be bestowed in the last days prior to the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The restoration of the

{*9*—1830}

14 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.

{*9*—1830}

15 And it came to pass that I beheld that the wrath of God was poured out upon that great and abominable church, insomuch that there were wars and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth.

16 And as there began to be wars and rumors of wars among all the nations which belonged to the mother of abominations, the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold, the wrath of God is upon the mother of harlots; and behold, thou seest all these things—

17 And when the day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon the mother of harlots, which

1 Ne. 14:14
AF 320
MD 667
DNTC 2:527
EM 2:568
CR81-O 95
CR87-A 87
CR88-A 7
CR88-A 8
CR91-O 43
CR93-A 97
CR01-A 44
1 Ne. 14:14–15
CR80-A 47

1 Ne. 14:15
AF 50
1 Ne. 14:15–16
EM 2:568
EM 4:1598
1 Ne. 14:15–17
MD 344

1 Ne. 14:16
DNTC 3:554

fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ would be effected by direct revelation through inspired servants of God. The power of God, the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God, must be conferred upon the righteous, that the ordinances of salvation and exaltation might be performed in behalf of the faithful and repentant. The principles of Zion, unity of heart and mind, the bonding of husbands and wives, together with their children, must be established among the children of God, that the promises of eternity might find expression in their lives. The House of Israel, wherever they may be found, must be sought out and lifted up from their spiritual poverty and despair. Every nation, kindred, tongue, and people must be given the opportunity hear and understand the truth of the Gospel of Christ and have the power of the Holy Ghost edify and strengthen them, preparatory to them being lifted up by the atoning sacrifice of Christ unto immortality and eternal life, even as many as will.

14.17.18—*harlots*—Originally, a “harlot” was a rogue, a vagabond, or a knave. It has come to refer specifically to a woman who has sold her sexual favors for gain.

14.17.69—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

14.18 The connection between that portion of the history of the world which Nephi has been shown is here equated with that about which the Apostle John would write in his Revelation seven hundred years later upon the isle of Patmos.

14.18.13—*Look!*—Almost all of the separate instructional vignettes are introduced by this and similar words. In some respects, this use of the word “Look!” is like unto the typical use of the word “Hearken!” There is more than mere observation that is being commanded. “Look and comprehend!” is more of the attitude expected, just as “Hearken!” means to “Listen and obey!”

14.19 There would come a time when the peoples of both hemispheres would come in contact with one another, the remnants of the family of Lehi and the nations of the Gentiles. Once that happened there would be one history instead of two. That conjoined history would then be the purview of John the Beloved.

14.19.14–15—*white robe*—The white robe is symbolic of John’s righteous observance of the Gospel of Christ, of having been cleansed body, mind, and spirit by the atoning blood of the Son of God.

14.20 Nephi had witnessed the calling of the Twelve Apostles who served with the Savior during his mortal ministry. He had also seen the selection of the twelve who would serve his own posterity after the visit of Jesus to his posterity after the resurrection. The angel clearly identifies the one who would be responsible for the prophecy regarding the latter days when the family of Lehi and the nations of the Gentiles would become aware of one another as one of the original Twelve.

14.20.12—*apostles*—The Greek roots from which the term “apostles” derives originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah,

is the great and abominable church of all the earth, whose founder is the devil, then, at that day, the work of the Father shall commence, in preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants, which he hath made to his people who are of the house of Israel.

{*¶*—1830}

18 And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, saying: Look!

19 And I looked and beheld a man, and he was dressed in a white robe.

20 And the angel said unto me: Behold one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

1 Ne. 14:18–27
MLM 379
EM 2:758
EM 3:1282
1 Ne. 14:18–28
DNCTC 3:549
EM 3:1014
1 Ne. 14:18–30
DNCTC 1:60

1 Ne. 14:19–29
MD 291

1 Ne. 14:20, 24,
27
EM 2:731

the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

14.21 The Book of Revelation composed by the Apostle John embraces the entire temporal existence of the earth, from the time of the Fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to the end of the Millennial Reign when the earth with die and be resurrected as the eternal home of the righteous. It is at the point where John's history of the world treats the events during the sixth thousand years that Nephi is obliged to end his narration. Thus, John the Beloved's account would suffice those of Lehi's descendants who wished to continue the details of Nephi's vision.

14.22 The end of the world, or the end of the wicked, takes place at the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ at the beginning of the seventh thousand years of the earth's temporal existence.

14.23 The book that proceeded out of the mouth of a Jew began as a compilation of the writings of the prophets of God by the priest Ezra after the Babylonian captivity. That which we now called the Old Testament is a fragment of that original compilation. With the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ in the meridian of time, the original book was added to by the Apostles of God with their teachings and writings. As that enhanced book passed through the unhallowed hands of the great and abominable church, many plain and precious were excised.

14.23.30—*Jew*—Many have understandably concluded that “the Jew” spoken of was Ezra, a scribe and priest who lived during the middle of the fifth century BC. He is credited by historians and Jewish tradition as being the instrument by which the Jewish canon was established after the Babylonian Captivity. He is definitely the writer of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Some scholars attribute to Ezra the editorship of Esther, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Twelve Prophets. Ezra was, in many aspects, a man like unto Moses the Lawgiver.

14.24 Although Nephi was cautioned to leave the material that would be articulated in John's writing out of his own account of the vision, he was given the opportunity to see all that about which John would write. That revealed knowledge will surface in other parts of Nephi's writing as he teaches his family.

14.24.7—*apostle*—The Greek roots from which the term “apostle” derives originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

21 Behold, he shall see and write the remainder of these things; yea, and also many things which have been.

22 And he shall also write concerning the end of the world.

23 Wherefore, the things which he shall write are just and true; and behold they are written in the book which thou beheld proceeding out of the mouth of the Jew; and at the time they proceeded out of the mouth of the Jew, or, at the time the book proceeded out of the mouth of the Jew, the things which were written were plain and pure, and most precious and easy to the understanding of all men.

24 And behold, the things which this apostle of the Lamb shall write are many things which thou hast seen; and behold, the remainder shalt thou see.

1 Ne. 14:23
DNTC 3:432
CR84-A 83
CR95-A 112

14.25 The specific details of the chronological account which Nephi was then witnessing in his Vision would end as the history of the children of Lehi became conflated with that of the eastern hemisphere. John the Beloved would be given the assignment to describe that period of time in his own narrative in the Book of Revelation.

14.25.20—*apostle*—The Greek roots from which the term “apostle” derives originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

14.25.23–25—*Lamb of God*—There is hardly a more consistent symbolic relationship anywhere in the scriptural record than that between Jesus of Nazareth and the sacrificial lamb. This symbolic relationship was established before the foundations of the earth were laid.

14.26 Certainly all those who have been called to serve as the prophet, seer, and revelator to open any given dispensation would have been given such a view of time and eternity. Enoch’s views were glorious and embraced the entire history of the world. Abraham’s mind and heart were likewise graced with a knowledge of the salvation of the entire earth through faith. Moses’ interviews with the Lord God of Israel were rich with perspective, having perceived the history of this planet from its inception as a mortal habitation for the sons and daughters of God to its exaltation as a celestial jewel in the crown of God the Father.

14.26.51—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

14.27 We ought not be surprised at the omniscience of God even though we may not understand it. That the given name of the Apostle John was known many centuries before his birth is no more irregular than the prophets of God knowing the given name of the Savior of this world, together with that of his mother many generations before he was to come into the world as the babe of Bethlehem.

14.27.3—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

14.27.13—*apostle*—The Greek roots from which the term “apostle” derives originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to

25 But the things which thou shalt see hereafter thou shalt not write; for the Lord God hath ordained the apostle of the Lamb of God that he should write them.

26 And also others who have been, to them hath he shown all things, and they have written them; and they are sealed up to come forth in their purity, according to the truth which is *in the Lamb, in the own due time of the Lord, unto the house of Israel.

{¶—1830}

27 And I, Nephi, heard and bear record, that the name of the apostle of the Lamb was John, according to the word of the angel.

1 Ne. 14:25–27
DNTC 3:433
EM 2:754
1 Ne. 14:25–28
EM 2:845

1 Ne. 14:26
MLM 449

* p. 35

1 Ne. 14:27
DS 1:145

time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

14.27.18—*John*—Frequently referred to as the “Beloved”. He is the author of the Gospel of John, the three small Epistles of John, and the book of Revelation, all in the New Testament. There are other manuscripts which have been prophetically alluded to but have not, as yet, seen the light of day. The desire of his heart was to remain upon the earth as the Savior’s emissary until Jesus returned in glory. Jesus granted his wish and thus became the faithful guardian ordained to stand as a witness of the apostasy and darkness that descended upon the world. He, with Peter and James, would be instrumental in the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood in this last dispensation, by which the Church and Kingdom of God was once more established upon the earth. The account of his labors during the intervening millennia will make fascinating reading for the faithful.

14.28 The “unspeakable things” of the Kingdom of God are sometimes so because the Lord has commanded His servants to say nothing of certain revelations which they have had. In this sense they may be “unwritable” as well; some of Nephi’s views were thus proscribed. Some men and women have been given wonderful glimpses of eternity and told that although they might not speak of them openly to the general populace of the world, they could write them down and seal them up to come forth in a more believing generation. Many such documents have been prepared to come forth during the Millennium.

14.28.4—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

14.29 Nephi bears his solemn, yet humble testimony, that his account of his interview with the angel of God is true. The Vision of the Tree of Life thus bears the confirming witnesses of two of the servants of God, that of Lehi and his worthy son.

14.30 Although his readers may feel that Nephi’s narrative is far too sparse, yet he has written that which the Father and the Son have given him leave to commit to the Small Plates.

14.30.36—*Amen*—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

15.1 We are not privy as to what exactly happened to Nephi, whether he was in the spirit or in the body when he had his interview with the angel (see 11.1). Had he been physically transported by the Spirit to the mountain, then he was physically returned to his father’s camp at this point. If he had been in

28 And behold, I, Nephi, am forbidden that I should write the remainder of the things which I saw and heard; wherefore the things which I have written sufficeth me; and I have written but a small part of the things which I saw.

29 And I bear record that I saw the things which my father saw, and the angel of the Lord did make them known unto me.

30 And now I make an end of speaking concerning the things which I saw while I was carried away in the spirit; and if all the things which I saw are not written, the things which I have written are true. And thus it is. Amen.

{Chapter IV}
(Chapter 15)

{¶—1830}

1 AND it came to pass that after I, Nephi, had been carried away in the spirit, and seen all these things, I returned to the tent of my father.

1 Ne. 14:28–30
CR94-O 80

1 Ne. 15
MD 489
MM 1:313
EM 1:142, 184

a trance-like state, he had now come to himself and returned to encampment from wherever he had had his vision.

15.1.9—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

15.2 Laman and Lemuel were disputing details regarding the Allegory of the Olive Tree, at least that was the topic of their first question to Nephi (see 15.7). We are not told if Sam were engaged in the polemic, but given his disposition it seems unlikely.

15.3 Nephi’s heart had been softened towards the teachings of his father, Lehi, because he had offered up fervent prayer that he might know for himself the truth of his father’s words. Laman and Lemuel, for whatever reason, were not so diligent and as a result their minds and hearts were darkened spiritually. Therefore when they began to intellectualize about the Allegory of Zenos and the Vision of the Tree of Life they could only resort to fruitless debate.

15.4 Nephi had witnessed the entire destruction of his posterity at the hands of the posterity of his brethren. He had watched the spirit of inspiration wane in the lives of the righteous until only wickedness and mayhem remained. The seeds of the fall of the children of Lehi were visible in the lives of his two older brothers. There was little he could do for them.

15.4.4—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

15.5 Nephi was understandably depressed by the open vision that he had experienced of the future of his family. He was undoubtedly physically drained by the tremendous spiritual experience as well. For a period of time he was not in a position to be a benefit to his family. This disputation, however, probably continued in Lehi’s tent, the brothers attempting to interpret their father’s word by the light of their own understanding. A bootless exercise.

15.6 The word “disputations” is somewhat charged, being more negative in its semantic value than “reasoning” or “discussing”. The primary meaning of “*puto*” in Latin has to do with “throwing, casting, driving, and casting”. One wonders why Laman and Lemuel chose not to ask their father directly what he meant. One wonders why they were willing to accept Nephi’s offer to help them comprehend the Allegory.

15.7 Lehi had taught his family earlier regarding the Allegory of the Olive Tree, about which Nephi gives but a truncated account (see 10.11–15). Whether the disputations arose because of this initial instruction or from subsequent teachings we do not know because of the terseness of Nephi narration. Lehi and Nephi had already received open visions of the future history of their

2 And it came to pass that I beheld my brethren, and they were disputing one with another concerning the things which my father had spoken unto them.

3 For he truly spake many great things unto them, which were hard to be understood, save a man should inquire of the Lord; and they being hard in their hearts, therefore they did not look unto the Lord as they ought.

4 And now I, Nephi, was grieved because of the hardness of their hearts, and also, because of the things which I had seen, and knew they must unavoidably come to pass because of the great wickedness of the children of men.

{*¶*—1830}

5 And it came to pass that I was overcome because of my afflictions, for I considered that mine afflictions were great above all, because of the destruction of my people, for I had beheld their fall.

{*¶*—1830}

6 And it came to pass that after I had received strength I spake unto my brethren, desiring to know of them the cause of their disputations.

7 And they said: Behold, we cannot understand the words which our father hath spoken concerning the natural branches of the olive-tree, and also concerning the

1 Ne. 15:1–11
EM 2:977
1 Ne. 15:3
CR99-O 5
1 Ne. 15:3,7–11
CR89-A 5

posterity. They knew that their journey would take them half a world away from where they were presently encamped. They knew, without question, the significance of the various “natural branches” which were taken into the various parts of the vineyard. These were remnants of the House of Israel, as Lehi and his family constituted a remnant of the covenant people, who were being separated from the “mother tree” planted in the land of Canaan. The despised Gentiles were to be the means by which those scattered portions would be gathered again. Laman and Lemuel’s cultural biases were hindering their ability to grasp the Allegory in all of its aspects.

15.7.27—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

15.8 An embarrassing question, this. The simplest of all solutions is the one not thought of, or rather, the one not attempted because of its “anti-intellectual” flavor. For men whose minds are grounded in the material things of this fallen world, prayer seems a bit silly. Therefore, what is required is humility, like that of a little child.

15.9 The response of the brothers to the question as to whether or not they had prayed for understanding can be properly read with just a bit of sarcasm in their tone. Undoubtedly Nephi had expressed himself before in this matter. The softening of his own heart had come as the result of fervent prayer regarding the value of his father’s visions and dreams. Laman and Lemuel had been frequently rebuked by a series of beings, both temporal and divine, because of the hardness of their hearts and their unwillingness to humble themselves that they might be guided and directed by the Spirit of God. Unwilling to accept their chastisement with good grace, they simply became cynical. “God will not tell us, unworthy creatures, anything; you and father are the only ones who are so blessed!”

15.10 The specific commandments had to do with personal prayer, although there were no doubt other problems in the lives of Laman and Lemuel that were hindering their spiritual progress. Disobedience to the law of God is followed by an unwillingness to approach His throne in prayer. There is an uneasiness in the hearts of the wicked that fears light and truth. The hardness of one’s heart is not directly caused by sin, but rather by a willful avoidance of the consequences of sin. We have a tendency to inure ourselves against the suffering of our souls which disobedience invariably brings. The inuring is best described as a hardening of the heart.

15.11 We are not privy to exactly when the Lord uttered these words to the family, but the fact that Nephi is reminding his brothers of that previous counsel would suggest that it had happened openly. It may have very well been part of a revelation to one of the ancient prophets whose writings were preserved upon the Brass Plates. Lehi had taken time to share much of what had been recorded there with his children. Nephi may simply be reminding them of the time when that commandment had been discussed.

Gentiles.

8 And I said unto them: Have ye inquired of the Lord?

1 Ne. 15:8, 11
CR84-A 43

9 And they said unto me: We have not; for the Lord maketh no *such thing known unto us.

* p. 36

10 Behold, I said unto them: How is it that ye do not keep the commandments of the Lord? How is it that ye will perish, because of the hardness of your hearts?

11 Do ye not remember the things which the Lord hath said?— If ye will not harden your hearts, and ask me in faith, believing that ye shall receive, with diligence in keeping my commandments, surely these things shall be made known

1 Ne. 15:11
DNTC 3:392
EM 3:1162
CR91-O 26, 115
CR00-A 53

15.12 In the Allegory of the Olive Tree, the dying portions of the Tree were to be pruned away and burned (see *JA-C 5.7-9*). The brothers may have been concerned that the escape from Jerusalem, their having been cut off from the tame olive tree, was merely a preamble to be burned in the wilderness. Nephi pointed out that there were other branches aside from the ones that were going to be destroyed in the fire. These were the “young and tender” branches which were to be placed in the nethermost parts of the vineyard to be nourished and cared for. The complaint of the older brothers had been that all that was good and profitable was being left behind in Jerusalem and that they were going to perish in the wilderness (see 2.11). Nephi assures them that this would not be the case.

15.12.10—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

15.13 Toward the end of the Allegory of Zenos, the prophet testifies that there would come a time when the “wild” branches that had been grafted into the “mother” tree would be cut way from the “mother” tree and would be grafted into the “daughter” trees that had come from the transplanting of the “young and tender” branches in the very beginning of the narrative (see *JA-C 5.55*). That is to say, the Gentiles would find their way to the various places where the House of Israel had been scattered and eventually there would be a comingling of their traditions. By the same token, the “natural” branches of the “daughter” trees would be grafted back on to the “mother” tree in the place of the those “wild” branches that had been taken to the “daughter” trees (see *JA-C 5.56*). At the simplest level of understanding, Zenos is suggesting that one day the elements of scattered Israel would have direct access to the hereditary promises and blessings that had once been extended to their ancestors.

15.13.22—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

15.13.49—*Messiah*—A Hebrew word meaning the “Anointed One”. Translated into Greek, this phrase becomes, in its anglicized form, “Christ”.

15.14 Here Nephi explains the direct effect of having the branches from the “daughter” trees grafted back into the “mother” tree. The peoples who had dwindled in unbelief, Lehi’s descendants among them, would one day have access to all that which had been known to their fathers, all of the principles and ordinances of salvation and exaltation.

15.14.19—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have

unto you.

{*9-1830*}

12 Behold, I say unto you, that the house of Israel was compared unto an olive-tree, by the Spirit of the Lord which was in our father; and behold are we not broken off from the house of Israel, and are we not a branch of the house of Israel?

1 Ne. 15:12-13
AF 320
1 Ne. 15:12-16
MLM 212
1 Ne. 15:12-20
MD 14

13 And now, the thing which our father meaneth concerning the grafting in of the natural branches through the fulness of the Gentiles, is, that in the latter days, when our seed shall have dwindled in unbelief, yea, for the space of many years, and many generations after the Messiah shall be manifested in body unto the children of men, then shall the fulness of the gospel of the Messiah come unto the Gentiles, and from the Gentiles unto the remnant of our seed—

1 Ne. 15:13
MM 4:314
EM 2:893
1 Ne. 15:13-14
CR93-A 34
CR95-A 45
1 Ne. 15:13-17
MLM 238
1 Ne. 15:13,18
CR02-O 42

14 And at that day shall the remnant of our seed know that they are of the house of Israel, and that they are the covenant people of the Lord; and then shall they know and come to the knowledge of their forefathers, and also to the knowl-

1 Ne. 15:14
PM 237
EM 2:560
1 Ne. 15:14-15
CR93-A 100

been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

15.14.50—*gospel*—That is to say, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance from sin, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.

15.14.53—*Redeemer*—The English word “Redeemer” derives from roots which mean to “obtain, purchase, ransom”.

15.15 As Nephi saw in his Vision, the Gentiles would be responsible for bringing the fundamental principles of Christianity to the posterity of Lehi who had fallen into such rank apostasy that they remembered little or nothing of the promises that had once been extended to their ancestors. This would come in part by way of the “book” which the Gentiles carried with them when they encountered the posterity of Lehi as the western hemisphere was opened to European colonization. The fullness of the Gospel of Christ would also come by way of the Gentiles; that is, the saints of God who were of European ancestry who would bring the Book of Mormon and other revelations of God to the seed of Lehi. Through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, through obedience to the commandments of God, both Gentiles and scattered Israel would become one people, nourished and strengthened by the Spirit of Christ.

15.16 Even though these scattered remnants of the House of Israel may have fallen into obscurity, hidden from the eyes of men as far as their true identity is concerned, there would come a time in the which they would be revealed as the heirs of salvation and exaltation. True heirs of the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

15.16.16—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

15.17 The scattering of Israel was to take place as a result of Gentile oppression. The scattering of the northern Ten Tribes, the Kingdom of Israel, came at the hands of the Assyrians in 721 BC. The scattering of the southern two Tribes came at the hands of the Babylonians in 591 BC. The scattering of the children of Lehi came at the hands of the Europeans beginning at the end of the 15th Century and has continued somewhat unabated since then. Sometime after this final scattering, that of the Lamanites, the process of the gathering would begin in earnest. Inasmuch as the Gentiles would be the means of bringing the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the scattered remnants of Israel, of necessity they would become aware of the power of God through the ordinances of the Gospel and the authority of the Priesthood. This opportunity would come as a direct result of the rejection of Jesus Christ by the Jews in the days of his mortal ministry.

15.17.25—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-

edge of the gospel of their Redeemer, which was ministered unto their fathers by him; wherefore, they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer and the very points of his doctrine, that they may know how to come unto him and be saved.

15 And then at that day will they not rejoice and give praise unto their everlasting God, their rock and their salvation? Yea, at that day, will they not receive the strength and nourishment from the true vine? Yea, will they not come unto the true fold of God?

16 Behold, I say unto you, Yea; they shall be remembered again among the house of Israel; they shall be grafted in, being a natural branch of the olive-tree, into the true olive-tree.

17 And this is what our father meaneth; and he meaneth that it will not come to pass until after they are scattered by the Gentiles; and he meaneth that it shall come by way of the Gentiles, that the Lord may show his power unto the Gentiles, for the very cause that he shall be rejected of the Jews, or of the house of Israel.

1 Ne. 15:15
AGQ 1:98
MD 205

Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

15.18.59—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

15.18.65—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

15.18 To use the imagery of the Allegory of Zenos, all of the trees in the vineyard would become productive with good and wholesome fruit because of the mutual ingrafting that would take place between the “wild” tree, the “mother” tree, and the “daughter” trees. In the process of time, there would not be a people upon the face of the earth that will not have been affected directly by the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

15.18.18—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

15.18.39—*Abraham*—The undisputed “Father of the Faithful”. Modern biblical scholars are generally kind to Abraham as are most theologians in the sister religious of Judaism. The spiritual stature of Abraham is, for the most part, immeasurable by man. Abraham is one of the Lord God’s noblemen, whose faith and confidence in the divine word are equaled or excelled by few who have come into mortality upon this earth. Removing the Lord Jesus Christ from the list of candidates, however, would probably render our estimation of Abraham all but absolute. Abraham was one of three sons born to Terah during a millennium of poverty and famine. Through Abraham’s ministrations the promises made to the ancient fathers were preserved and re-established in earnest. In one of the most tender of moments recorded in secular or ecclesiastical history, the Lord God of Heaven instructed Abraham in the nature of the greatest gift that a loving God may bestow upon his creation when he asked for the sacrificed life of his son Isaac.

15.19 After the prophesied seventy years of captivity specified by Jeremiah, Cyrus the king of the Persians, allowed the Jews to return to Palestine to establish both the city of Jerusalem and the Temple. Six hundred years later, that Temple would be destroyed as the Romans put down the First Jewish Rebellion in AD 70. The nation itself would cease to exist sixty years after that at the end of the Second Jewish Rebellion. From that time forward, for more than seventeen hundred years, the Jews would wander throughout the world without a land of divine inheritance. It was not until the middle of the 20th Century that that blessing was partially realized.

15.19.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

15.19.26—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

18 Wherefore, our father hath not spoken of our seed alone, but also of all the house of Israel, pointing to the covenant which should be fulfilled in the latter days; which covenant the Lord made to our father Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

{*¶*—1830}

19 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, spake much unto them concerning these things; yea, I spake unto them concerning the restoration of the Jews in the latter days.

1 Ne. 15:18
MLM 245
CR90-O 94
CR93-O 49
CR95-A 45
* p. 37

1 Ne. 15:19–20
AF 334
MD 636
CR81-A 18

15.20 Nephi does not tell us which part of the prophecy of Isaiah that he cited in order to convince his brethren that the Jews and the rest of the House of Israel would one day be restored and reestablished as the covenant people of God. There is, however, but one place in Isaiah where the Lord explicitly states that His people would no longer be confounded. That is to be found in Isaiah 54. The Lord Jesus Christ himself quotes the entire chapter in his teachings to the Nephites about the restoration of the House of Israel in the latter days (see 3 NE 21–22).

15.20.10—*Isaiah*—There is hardly another man in the history of the world whose writings have received both the accolades of the Savior and the admiration of men. Isaiah lived during the tumultuous years that defined the eighth century before the birth of Jesus Christ. He testified the word of the Lord to the kings of Judah; Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Manasseh. Tradition suggests that Isaiah was martyred at the hands of Manasseh for his fervent and unrelenting witness of the truth. While Isaiah testified to his own people regarding their circumstances, his writings may find application to the entire House of Israel in every time and place, including the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times and thereafter. His testimony of the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ is among the clearest that appears in the Old Testament today.

15.20.18—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

15.20.24—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

15.21 Having satisfied their curiosity regarding their father’s teachings about the Allegory of Zenos, Laman and Lemuel turned to the Vision of the Tree of Life. Nephi was adequate to the task of clarifying for his brothers every aspect of that Dream. It is interesting that Laman and Lemuel seem satisfied with short answers, thinking apparently that they then had sufficient comprehension of their father’s words. They were satisfied with the most superficial of explanations.

15.22 One wonders if Laman and Lemuel progressed any further than this solitary association between the Tree and its name. Unlike Nephi, the two older brothers were not interested in the implications of the imagery. Nephi had learned for himself that the Tree was Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the earthly manifestation of the Love of God (see 11.9–22). The brothers apparently had no context into which they might have placed those glorious truths.

15.23 Having “mastered” the meaning of the Tree, Laman and Lemuel gallop along to the significance of the Rod of Iron, just like children attempting to decipher a puzzle. The two brothers are not alone in their haste; there are many who are not willing to take the necessary time and effort to perceive the spiritual aspects of the doctrines of the Kingdom.

15.24 Nephi’s response to Laman and Lemuel may be seen as an indictment of sorts. What had been their attitude about retrieving from Laban the Brass Plates whereon were written the Law of Moses and the testimonies of the prophets of God? Whether they survived or perished as a covenant people

20 And I did rehearse unto them the words of Isaiah, who spake concerning the restoration of the Jews, or of the house of Israel; and after they were restored they should no more be confounded, neither should they be scattered again. And it came to pass that I did speak many words unto my brethren, that they were pacified and did humble themselves before the Lord.

{¶—1830}

21 And it came to pass that they did speak unto me again, saying: What meaneth this thing which our father saw in a dream? What meaneth the tree which he saw?

22 And I said unto them: It was a representation of the tree of life.

23 And they said unto me: What meaneth the rod of iron which our father saw, that led to the tree?

24 And I said unto them that it was the word of God; and whoso would hearken unto the word of God, and would hold fast unto it,

1 Ne. 15:20
CR92-O 113

1 Ne. 15:21
MD 208

1 Ne. 15:23–24
EM 2:754
CR89-A 5
CR90-O 83

1 Ne. 15:24
CR87-A 87
CR88-A 70
CR92-O 37,

hinged on their attention to those things preserved by their ancestors (see 4.12–17). Were Laman and Lemuel willing to accept their father as a prophet, a man who regularly conversed with the God of Heaven?

15.25 One may not begin with a fervent testimony of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but one might cultivate a desire to know for one’s self through obedience to the practical commandments of the Father. All of the commandments of God are coupled with a blessing, some more readily visible than others when they are bestowed. When we keep a particular commandment, the blessing invariably comes and we learn for ourselves that the principle was a correct one. To use another analogy, when one plants a seed and it sprouts, then the planter knows that he has not been fiddling with a pebble or some other inert material; he knows that he has been dealing with life, even though he might not know what the newly germinated seed will grow into. Nephi strongly encourages his brethren to attempt to keep even the least of the commandments of God so that they might be blessed, and therefore have faith unto salvation.

15.25.3—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

15.26 On to the river of filthy waters without further ado say the brothers. This cursory investigation of the Vision of the Tree of Life would not serve them well.

15.27 Nephi had been instructed by the angel that the filthiness of the river of water that sprang from the fountain was comparable to the enmity which existed between himself and his brothers, an enmity that would continue until the destruction of the Nephites a thousand years in the future (see 12.14–16). This division between himself and his brethren would be the source of immeasurable grief for Nephi.

15.28 There was only one way that a man might obtain the fruit of the Tree of Life and that was by the strait and narrow path which was defined by the Rod of Iron. By holding on to the rod, the children of the promise were able to bypass the fountain and the river and make their way directly to the Tree and to eternal life, if they so chose. A man could not approach the Tree by any other angle. Someone attempting to obtain the fruit in a direct path from the great and spacious building would find his way blocked by the gulf etched out by the river of filthy waters. Without faith and obedience a man is left unto his own devices which almost invariably involve anger, lust, frustration, and sorrow, the ingredients for one’s personal hell. Laman and Lemuel have continually demonstrated that their larders are filled with the staples of the wicked.

15.28.25—*saints*—In reference to the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ, those who have covenanted to no longer partake of the wickedness of the world. The Greek word used here means “those not of the earth”.

they would never perish; neither could the temptations and the fiery darts of the adversary overpower them unto blindness, to lead them away to destruction.

25 Wherefore, I, Nephi, did exhort them to give heed unto the word of the Lord; yea, I did exhort them with all the energies of my soul, and with all the faculty which I possessed, that they would give heed to the word of God and remember to keep his commandments always in all things.

26 And they said unto me: What meaneth the river of water which our father saw?

27 And I said unto them that the water which my father saw was filthiness; and so much was his mind swallowed up in other things that he beheld not the filthiness of the water.

28 And I said unto them that it was an awful gulf, which separated the wicked from the tree of life, and also from the saints of God.

107, 113
CR01-O 86

1 Ne. 15:25
EM 4:1487
CR88-A 70
CR96-A 109

1 Ne. 15:28–29
EM 3:1062

15.29 Hell is the ultimate reality where the wicked are exposed to the foolishness of their own choices. They cannot deny the natural consequences of their disobediences, yet they covet the blessings which the righteous have obtained through their willingness to do the will of God the Father. In the end, however, it is their pride that hinders their repentance; they are unwilling to admit defeat in their wickedness, and therefore are deprived of happiness and joy. Yet they fear the judgment of God and await in terror for the reprisals that must surely come to pass. Satan continually whispers to them that there is no possibility for redemption. If they persist in hearkening to that silky voice of discouragement, they will perish in their sins. The only solution is to become as a little child, putting off the natural man, retracing one's steps from all other paths but one, and with the righteous take hold of the rod that leads to the Tree and eternal life and joy.

15.30 Upon reading this description of the justice of God, one should immediately think of the cherubim and flaming sword that protected the way toward the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden. Even if the depths of hell were not located where they were, even if someone could construct a bridge across that gulf, the law of God would prohibit any unredeemed soul from partaking of the fruit of the Tree of Life. We should probably not equate the gulf created by the river of filthy waters and the flaming fire of the justice of God.

15.31 Laman and Lemuel ask a series of extraordinary questions here. We probably should assume that "this thing" is in reference to the entire Dream or Vision of the Tree of Life, but their concern has been peaked by the reference to the justice of God and the gulf of hell carved out by the wickedness of one's personal conduct. The brothers seem to be asking Nephi if the elements of the vision pertain only to mortal life or if they pertain to the final disposition of mankind after death. In other words, would they have a second chance to prove themselves after death, since they were clearly bungling their opportunity in mortality?

15.32 Nephi tells his brothers that this life is the proving ground. The way that we treat one another here will follow us into the spirit world and from there into eternity, if we do not repent of that which we have done amiss. We must press forward in the strait and narrow path while we are yet in the body, keeping the commandments of God that we may taste of the goodness of God earlier rather than later. If we expect to live lives of wickedness and then be miraculously changed from sinfulness to righteousness because of death and resurrection, we will be sadly disappointed. The posterity of Lehi would hold these notions at various times in their history, thinking that remission of sin will come to all regardless of what the children of men do in the body.

15.33 Now is the day of repentance, particularly if one knows the will of God. Laman and Lemuel knew how they were supposed to conduct themselves in life. They had been taught by goodly parents as had been Nephi. In the process of their young lives they had made choices which had gone against the commandments of God and they had not repented of those infractions. If they were "filthy" when they left this life, they cannot possibly avoid the justice of God. They will find themselves in hell, that place reserved for those who knew to do good, but chose not to obey the voice of God.

29 And I said unto them that it was a representation of that awful hell, which the angel said unto me was prepared for the wicked.

30 And I said unto them that our father also saw that the justice of God did also divide the wicked from the righteous; and the brightness thereof was like unto the brightness of a flaming fire, which ascendeth up unto God forever and ever, and hath no end.

{~~9~~—1830}

31 And they said unto me: Doth this thing mean the torment of the body in the days of probation, or doth it mean the final state of the soul after the death of the temporal body, or doth *it speak of the things which are temporal?

32 And it came to pass that I said unto them that it was a representation of things both temporal and spiritual; for the day should come that they must be judged of their works, yea, even the works which were done by the temporal body in their days of probation.

33 Wherefore, if they should die in their wickedness they must be cast off also, as to the things which are spiritual, which are pertaining to righteousness; wherefore, they must be brought to stand before God, to be judged of their works; and if their works have been

1 Ne. 15:29
MD 837

1 Ne. 15:30–35
MD 407

1 Ne. 15:31
EM 3:1392

* p. 38

1 Ne. 15:32
EM 3:1290

1 Ne. 15:33
AF 72, 108
EM 2:774
EM 3:1211
CR00-O 41
1 Ne. 15:33–34
MF 146

15.34 Men are redeemed from death and hell according to their obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and in no other way. Whatever a man's belief to the contrary, there is but one standard by which we are judged and that is the law of God. If we are not redeemed of our sins through the blood of Christ, then we cannot possibly inherit the Kingdom of Heaven for we would yet be in our sins. The Father cannot allow the least degree of sin, for He is pure and holy, and there is no darkness in Him. The very nature of God the Eternal Father is such that no unclean thing can enter into His presence with joy. Therefore, since the wicked cannot dwell with God, they must dwell elsewhere, a place prepared for them by Satan.

15.35 Our eternal home is that which has been prepared for us by him whose voice we have listened to during our mortal lives. If that voice be that of God, then we will dwell in joy and happiness with Him forever, cleansed, purified, and sanctified. If we have hearkened to the voice of the devil, then we must needs go where he bears sway, not that we will enjoy his company. Our fundamental nature is divine. If our lot is to be cast out from the presence of God, then we cannot possibly enjoy His absence. We are children of light and have been so since before the earth was created. To dwell in darkness would be antithetical to our divine nature and would thus made us miserable forever.

15.36 Eternal life, or the life that God Himself leads, is denied to those who have rejected the sacrifice of the Savior, who have ignored his invitation to come unto him. The process of traveling upon the strait and narrow path, tenaciously grasping onto the rod of iron, ignoring the mocking derision of the wicked and the temptations of the world and the wicked one, will prepare us to partake of that which is our eternal destiny as the children of a loving Heavenly Father.

16.1 There could be no question as to Nephi's evaluation of the continuing conduct of his older brothers; in light of the explanations which Nephi had given to them regarding the teachings of their father, there could be no question in their minds as to how Laman and Lemuel fit into the scheme of things. Any illusions that they may have had about themselves had evaporated.

16.1.10—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

16.2 The process of repentance is always an awakening. Lehi's observation about the wicked seeming to be in a deep sleep is as accurate a metaphor as

filthiness they must needs be filthy; and if they be filthy it must needs be that they cannot dwell in the kingdom of God; if so, the kingdom of God must be filthy also.

34 But behold, I say unto you, the kingdom of God is not filthy, and there cannot any unclean thing enter into the kingdom of God; wherefore there must needs be a place of filthiness prepared for that which is filthy.

35 And there is a place prepared, yea, even that awful hell of which I have spoken, and the devil is the preparator of it; wherefore the final state of the souls of men is to dwell in the kingdom of God, or to be cast out because of that justice of which I have spoken.

36 Wherefore, the wicked are rejected from the righteous, and also from that tree of life, whose fruit is most precious and most desirable above all other fruits; yea, and it is the greatest of all the gifts of God. And thus I spake unto my brethren. Amen.

{Chapter V}
(Chapter 16)

{¶—1830}

1 AND now it came to pass that after I, Nephi, had made an end of speaking to my brethren, behold they said unto me: Thou hast declared unto us hard things, more than we are able to bear.

{¶—1830}

2 And it came to pass that I said unto them that I knew that I had

1 Ne. 15:34
MF 19
FPM 178
CR86-A 69
CR97-A 11

1 Ne. 15:35
EM 2:586

1 Ne. 15:36
DS 2:217
CR02-A 98

1 Ne. 16
MD 489
EM 1:142, 145,
188, 213
EM 2:691, 701
EM 3:1005
1 Ne. 16:1
EM 3:1315
1 Ne. 16:1–3
CR89-A 5

1 Ne. 16:2
MD 408

could be given to describe the condition that sinners place themselves in. When the heart is alert, any straining of relations between the spirit of man and the Spirit of God is instantly sensed. Whether we call that guilt or grief, the effect is troublesome, filling the sinner with unease. The choices are quite simple. The person can forego any further transgressions and go through the process of obtaining forgiveness from those whom he has offended. This in the end is the simplest and best. A person who chooses not to repent still suffers the spiritual consequences of his sin. Typically a soul in such grief will permit himself to go into a kind of spiritual “shock” whereby he no longer “feels” the anguish of his own soul. Another metaphor that is frequently used is to say that the person has “hardened” his heart. The effect is the same. If a person is possessed of a hard heart or is past feeling, when the process of repentance is initiated, the full weigh and measure of his suffering returns. That is the literal meaning of the word “repentance”, “going back to the pain”. Having been past feeling or hardened of heart does not make the returning suffering any less. Therefore, the only effective way to pass through the process of repentance is to first have faith in Jesus Christ, calling upon his atoning sacrifice to ameliorate our personal anguish. The righteous are those who have, in large measure, expressed their faith in Christ through their repentance and in the making of sacred covenants which place them on the path of humility, forgiveness, and redemption.

16.3 Nephi has no hesitancy in reiterating his concern for Laman and Lemuel’s vile conduct toward himself and toward the others in the family who were attempting to live by every word that proceeded forth from the mouth of God. The righteous yearn for improvement, clarity of thought, pureness of motive, and the fullness of truth about themselves, as terrifying a prospect as that might seem.

16.4 Nephi wanted his brethren to keep the commandments because by so doing they would awake unto redemption through Jesus Christ. It is a singular gate through which every man and woman must pass if he or she is to obtain happiness and exaltation.

16.4.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

16.5 Notwithstanding all of his experiences to the contrary, Nephi was an optimist, fully expecting that every man, even his older brothers, could be redeemed from their wickedness if they would so chose. When his brethren pointed themselves in the right direction, Nephi was prepared to receive their petitions of forgiveness.

16.6 Although we may not presently know where the Valley of Lemuel is today, yet we should consider the place hallowed ground.

16.6.22—*Lemuel*—A valley named after the second son of Lehi and Sariah. He was for the most part of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

spoken hard things against the wicked, according to the truth; and the righteous have I justified, and testified that they should be lifted up at the last day; wherefore, the guilty taketh the truth to be hard, for it cutteth them to the very center.

3 And now my brethren, if ye were righteous and were willing to hearken to the truth, and give heed unto it, that ye might walk uprightly before God, then ye would not murmur because of the truth, and say: Thou speakest hard things against *us.

4 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did exhort my brethren, with all diligence, to keep the commandments of the Lord.

5 And it came to pass that they did humble themselves before the Lord; insomuch that I had joy and great hopes of them, that they would walk in the paths of righteousness.

6 Now, all these things were said and done as my father dwelt in a tent in the valley which he called Lemuel.

{*—1830*}

DNTC 1:150
DNTC 2:230
MM 4:15
EM 2:585
CR86-O 8
CR87-O 37

1 Ne. 16:3
CR89-O 103

* p. 39

16.7 As the patriarch of the family and as a bearer of the Melchizedek Priesthood, Lehi had been given authority to perform marriages between his sons and their chosen mates. As has been observed before, the romantics among us may look upon the marriage of Nephi and his wife as an extension of the protective concerns expressed by one of the daughters of Ishmael during the rebellion of Laman and Lemuel as the family of Ishmael was being guided to the tent of Lehi in the Valley of Lemuel (see 7.19). The two sons of Ishmael were already married (see 7.6).

16.7.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

16.7.15—*Ishmael*—That Lehi and Ishmael were acquainted prior to this time seems certain. It would seem somewhat reasonable to assume also, that the sons of Lehi were acquainted with the children of Ishmael, at least casually.

16.7.20–21—*my brethren*—Including, it is assumed, Laman, Lemuel, and Sam. This all implies that Ishmael had at least five marriageable daughters in his family when they left Jerusalem.

16.7.32—*Zoram*—The servant of Laban who had charge of the treasury wherein lay the Plates of Brass. He became a fast friend to Nephi and devoted disciple of Jesus Christ.

16.8 Lehi had obtained the Brass Plates from Laban in order that his posterity might be able to live the principles of the Gospel and walk uprightly in their observance of the Law of Moses for as long as it would be required of them. He also had obtained worthy companions for his sons. Nephi for his part, was extraordinarily satisfied by the way things had turned out for him.

16.8.22—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

16.8.29—*exceedingly*—As one commentator has pointed out, this was an exceedingly delicate and fine compliment to Nephi’s wife.

16.9 Having acquired all that remained necessary for Lehi to make his journey to the promised land, the family was now inspired by God to be on their way farther into the wilderness, away from the relative safety and sanctity of the Valley of Lemuel and into the inhospitable deserts of Arabia. For eight years they would be strangers in a strange land, beset on every side with the rawness of nature and the frailty of human weakness. It would appear that no one in the company was exempt from either.

16.10 We may easily speculate about the Sword of Laban and the Plates of Brass, by whom they were made and approximately when. The origins of the Liahona, however, escape us. Had this been an artifact made by divinely inspired men in ages past and then given to Lehi in order to facilitate his travels to the land of promise? Was the instrument a divinely manufactured object whose singular purpose was to encourage unity and faith in the hearts and minds of the families of Lehi and Ishmael? We may not know at this point, but we may be certain of its value beyond the first ten years or so of the history of the Nephi nation. The Liahona still exists, preserved by the hand of

7 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, took one of the daughters of Ishmael to wife; and also, my brethren took of the daughters of Ishmael to wife; and also Zoram took the eldest daughter of Ishmael to wife.

8 And thus my father had fulfilled all the commandments of the Lord which had been given unto him. And also, I, Nephi, had been blessed of the Lord exceedingly.

{¶—1830}

9 And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord spake unto my father by night, and commanded him that on the morrow he should take his journey into the wilderness.

10 And it came to pass that as my father arose in the morning, and went forth to the tent door, to his great astonishment he beheld upon the ground a round ball of curious workmanship; and it was of fine brass. And within the ball were two spindles; and the one pointed the way whither we should go into the

1 Ne. 16:7
AF 321
EM 2:705
EM 4:1577
EM 4:1629

1 Ne. 16:9
CR01-O 78

1 Ne. 16:10
AF 5
MD 440
PM 402
1 Ne. 16:10
EM 2:829, 830
EM 3:1429
CR86-O 81
1 Ne. 16:10,28–29

God for future uses known to Himself.

16.10.47–48—*two spindles*—One of the spindles most assuredly pointed the direction the company was expected to travel. Some scholars have suggested that the second spindle was merely the opposite end of the first, as with modern compasses. This does not appear to be the case. Alma the Younger teaches his son Helaman that both spindles functioned in the directive process, though he does not explain how (see *AL-C 37.40*). Nephi is a little more forthcoming in describing another aspect of the spindles (see 16.26–29). The design of the spindles or pointers was such that writing could appear on them from time to time, giving the company far more detailed instruction than just the general direction they were to go.

16.11 One wonders if the families had accumulated goods which they now would have to abandon. Perhaps the family of Ishmael had brought items with them that would not endure the next ten years of traveling and were therefore required to leave them behind. It is likely, however, that the reference is to permanent improvements that they had made to their encampment during the time they were accomplishing the primary tasks that the Lord had given them to do. As Lehi was leaving Jerusalem he took with him a certain amount of provisions (see 2.4), but we are not told how long those staples were meant to last. We are not told whether or not Ishmael and his family brought provisions with them when they joined Lehi's company. The Lord had apparently provided food as well, whether as a result of hunting or gathering. At the forefront of their long term concerns, however, was the necessity of having seed grain available when they reached a place where they might plant crops. Whether they did so in the Valley of Lemuel we do not know; whether they did so in the land of Bountiful before they set sail for the promised land we do not know. But they were continually mindful of the importance of having sufficient for their journeyings and having the wherewithal to provide for themselves were they to dwell in a particular place for a time.

16.12 The implication here is that Lehi's company had been camping on the north side of the river Laban while they were preparing for their journey into the wilderness.

16.12.20—*Laman*—A river in the wilderness south of Jerusalem that was named after the eldest of Lehi and Sariah's sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

16.13 If our rule of thumb is accurate, accounting a day's travel to be approximately 20 miles would equate to an eighty-mile journey before the company came to the place they called Shazer. If they traveled in a line parallel to the western coast of the Arabian peninsula, which seems likely given Nephi's description, then Shazer would have been approximately twenty-five or thirty miles south and east of the southern extremity of the Gulf of Aqaba, perhaps between the present day communities of As Sawrah and Al Muwaylih.

16.13.35—*Shazer*—Some scholars have suggested a relationship between Shazer and the Hebrew word "*chatsyir*" meaning "grass". As winsome a suggestion as that might be, the initial rounded glottal stop of the Hebrew is a far linguistic cry from the alveolar fricative indicated by the spelling found in the Book of Mormon.

wilderness.

EM 2:827

{*¶*—1830}

11 And it came to pass that we did gather together whatsoever things we should carry into the wilderness, and all the remainder of our provisions which the Lord had given unto us; and we did take seed of every kind that we might carry into the wilderness.

{*¶*—1830}

12 And it came to pass that we did take our tents and depart into the wilderness, across the river Laman.

13 And it came to pass that we traveled for the space of four days, nearly a south-southeast direction, and we did pitch our tents again; and we did call the name of the place Shazer.

{*¶*—1830}

16.14 Whatever may have been the extent of their preparations for their journey in the wilderness, after four days' travel the families felt it necessary to hunt for fresh food. It may have been that after the long period of time encamped at the Valley of Lemuel that ready game was lacking. Therefore when they reached another suitable place to camp for a time, they were able to provide themselves with fresh meat. There would come a time in their travels when the use of fire would come to an end, either because of a lack of combustibles or as a protection against marauders. In any case, the Lord God provided other means by which they could eat the animals that they killed during their hunts without fires. When this proscription and blessing came about we do not know for certain, but by the time they had their course of travel turned to the east, the practice was in place (see 17.1–3).

16.14.50—*Shazer*—Some scholars have suggested a relationship between Shazer and the Hebrew word “*chatsyir*” meaning “grass”. As winsome a suggestion as that might be, the initial rounded glottal stop of the Hebrew is a far linguistic cry from the alveolar fricative indicated by the spelling found in the Book of Mormon.

16.14.70—*fertile*—Enormous tracts in the Arabian Peninsula are hardly habitable. The worst of these regions is called the Empty Quarter. The western coast of Arabia is fundamentally an arid area with pockets of verdure caused by underground springs. Summer temperatures average 100 F. and the annual rainfall is less than four inches. This constitutes the most fertile parts of the wilderness.

16.14.82–83—*Red Sea*—That is to say, that tongue of the Egyptian sea that separates Egypt from the Arabian peninsula. The southern border of Israel.

16.15 The distance from Duba in the north to Abha in the south is in excess of 800 miles. At twenty miles a day, the journey would have taken them at least a month and a half. At this point we have no idea what constitutes “many days” in Nephi’s chronology, except it was undoubtedly more than four days. Whatever the time and distance involved, they were compelled to continuing their forays into the wilderness to obtain more food for their families.

16.16 One would think that the company would have had no particular problem finding places to camp if they were following a well-traveled trail. Yet Nephi makes a point of telling his readers that they followed the instructions of the Liahona rather than any manmade road. Apparently they were directed to smaller hidden springs in the wilderness which were seldom used by regular travelers. This procedure was undoubtedly for their own protection, both physical and spiritual.

16.17 Many scholars have noted the similarity between the prophetic use of the word “time” and the manner in which Nephi refers to their stay in various locations. Using that guideline, they have concluded that Lehi’s family remained at this particular campsite for almost a year. Others have equated “space of a time” with Daniel’s “the dividing of a time”, suggesting that the encampment lasted some six months. Still other speculators have speculated that Nephi’s use of the word “time” should signify “season” of which there were six in the Jewish reckoning, meaning that the encampment lasted approximately two months. In other words, we have no idea how long Lehi and his children remain at this resting place.

16.17.30–31—*obtain food*—One cannot help but wonder if this is a reference to the planting of crops. It seems possible, given that the men were

14 And it came to pass that we did take our bows and our arrows, and go forth into the wilderness to slay food for our families; and after we had slain food for our families we did return again to our families in the wilderness, to the place of Shazer. And we did go forth again in the wilderness, following the same direction, keeping in the most fertile parts of the wilderness, which were in the borders near the Red Sea.

15 And it came to pass that we did travel for the space of many days, slaying food by the way, with our bows and our arrows and our stones and our slings.

16 And we did follow the directions of the ball, which led us in the more fertile parts of the wilderness.

17 And after we had traveled for the space of many days, we did pitch our tents for the space of a time, that we might again rest ourselves and obtain food for our families.

1 Ne. 16:14
EM 1:144
1 Ne. 16:16
AF 5
1 Ne. 16:16, 26–
27
EM 2:829

* p. 40

able to hunt in conjunction with their travels.

16.18 It is interesting that Nephi is blamed by his brothers for the breaking of the bow, but nothing is said of the fact that Laman and Lemuel had not as yet replaced their bows which had lost their spring (see 16.21). That material was available to them is clearly indicated since Nephi himself would produce a wooden bow.

16.18.9—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

16.18.25–26—*fine steel*—There have been many attempts to explain how it was that Nephi could possess a bow of “fine steel” six hundred years before the birth of Christ. Most of the arguments ultimately cast aspersions upon individuals whose characters are above reproach. Was the bow made of a “copper” alloy rather than of iron? Was it merely “strengthened” or “steeled”? Did the phrase have reference to its shape rather than the material of which it had been made? We do not know. We do know that Laban’s sword was made of “precious steel” (see 4.9). If the ancients had a metallurgical process which gave iron alloys great tensile strength, might not that early technology have served in the construction of a bow of fine steel? We will find in the end that Joseph Smith’s translation of the prophet’s description of his hunting weapon was explicitly accurate.

16.19 Inasmuch as the company was not following well-defined roads in the wilderness, their travels would have been far more arduous by comparison to the commercial caravans that frequented the western coast of the Arabian Peninsula. The lack of food occasioned by the loss of the bows compounded the problems they were suffering.

16.20 We have come to expect complaints from the eldest sons of Lehi, especially when their creature comforts evaporate. The sons of Ishmael had already demonstrated that they were easily persuaded by their brothers-in-law in times of stress or trial (see 7.6). It is troubling, however, to find that Lehi, for a moment, succumbs to his afflictions as well. We should probably not underestimate the intensity of the company’s afflictions at this point in their travels. We ought to note that Nephi understands the nature of his stewardship; he is to be the teacher of his brethren, but not of his father and his mother. Nephi can take Laman and Lemuel to task for their recalcitrance, but any misstep on Lehi’s part is the direct responsibility of the Lord.

16.20.7—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

16.20.9—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

16.20.14—*Ishmael*—That Lehi and Ishmael were acquainted prior to this

{*¶*—1830}

18 And it came to pass that as I, Nephi, went forth to slay food, behold, I did break my bow, which was made of fine steel; and after I did break my bow, behold, my brethren were angry with me because of the loss of my bow, for we did obtain no food.

19 And it came to pass that we did return without food to our families, and being much fatigued, because of their journeying, they did suffer much for the want of food.

{*¶*—1830}

20 And it came to pass that Laman and Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael did begin to murmur exceedingly, because of their sufferings and afflictions in the wilderness; and also my father began to murmur against the Lord his God; yea, and they were all exceedingly sorrowful, even that they did murmur against the Lord.

1 Ne. 16:18–25
CR88-A 4

1 Ne. 16:20
CR89-O 103,
105

time seems certain. It would seem somewhat reasonable to assume also, that the sons of Lehi were acquainted with the children of Ishmael, at least casually.

16.21 There may have been alternative ways by which they could have hunted for food, such as the common sling, but it is apparent that the strength of the hunters had waned together with the strength of their wives and children. They were no longer physically able to do what was necessary to provide for themselves in any other fashion.

16.21.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

16.21.11–12—*afflicted with*—That is to say, Nephi had suffered deprivation along with his brothers; he is not here referring to their personal insults.

16.21.29—*it*—That is to say, their situation; their inability to effectively hunt.

16.22 Nephi knew that the complaining against God was counterproductive. It was their faith and unity, what there was of it, that had provided for them in the past. They had been led from place to place by the clear instructions of the Liahona and they had wanted for nothing up to this point. Why should they now give up hope, simply because the outward means of their providence, their bows, were useless?

16.22.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

16.23 Nephi had received a promise from the Lord that he and his posterity would inherit a promised land. He knew, without a doubt, that there was a way out of their circumstances no matter how dire they might appear to be. We are not told how long Nephi worked on his new bow, but in order for it to be even moderately effective he needed to invest a substantial amount of time and effort. One wonders where he obtained these materials, but whether through invention or inspiration Nephi's success at his task soon bore fruit. His petition to his father is notable for its humility and tenderness.

16.23.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

16.23.37—*sling*—Typically this type of weapon was constructed by attaching two strings to either side of a leather pad into which a small stone was placed. The sling was swung around above the head and having achieved the desired velocity, was released at the target by letting go of one of the strings. Deadly accuracy was achieved by both men and boys, as many wild animals and the giant Goliath learned for themselves.

16.24 We are not privy as to why Lehi had complained against the Lord, but he had clearly despaired because of the rebellion of his elder sons. Apparently

{¶—1830}

21 Now it came to pass that I, Nephi, having been afflicted with my brethren because of the loss of my bow, and their bows having lost their springs, it began to be exceedingly difficult, yea, insomuch that we could obtain no food.

22 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did speak much unto my brethren, because they had hardened their hearts again, even unto complaining against the Lord their God.

{¶—1830}

23 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did make out of wood a bow, and out of a straight stick, an arrow; wherefore, I did arm myself with a bow and an arrow, with a sling and with stones. And I said unto my father: Whither shall I go to obtain food?

24 And it came to pass that he did inquire of the Lord, for they had

1 Ne. 16:23–32
CR02-A 37

Lehi could not bring himself to approach the Lord on their behalf because of the hardness of their hearts, much like Mormon could not commend his people to God because of their wickedness (see *MR-C 9.21*). After Nephi's rather candid instruction of his brothers (see 16.22) they repented somewhat, at least enough so that Lehi was persuaded to petition the Lord on their behalf.

16.25 The brother of Jared suffered a similar rebuke for his failure to pray during a four year period (see *ET-C 2.13–15*). The Jaredites, too, were on their way to a promised land when this lapse had occurred. Any number of excuses might be given for both prophets, but the lesson to be learned is that there is nothing more important than the direct communication between God and His servants. "Where there is no vision, the people perish". If Lehi and his company were to survive to inherit the blessings in store for them, they would need to be diligent in their supplications to the God of Heaven. For a godly man like Lehi, the rebuke must have had a powerful effect on his spirit, as Nephi testifies, even the depths of sorrow.

16.26 As will be seen below, the writing was upon the two spindles rather than on the surface of the ball, as some scholars have suggested.

16.27 Only on one other occasion did Nephi describe his father as fearing and trembling (see 1.6). We might assume that the provocations were similar.

16.27.33—*Ishmael*—That Lehi and Ishmael were acquainted prior to this time seems certain. It would seem somewhat reasonable to assume also, that the sons of Lehi were acquainted with the children of Ishmael, at least casually.

16.28 A simple compass works on the principles of magnetism. The earth's core in combination with other factors has established a field of energy which can be detected with appropriately devised instruments. We may not comprehend the "fields" of energy which faith and obedience generate, but just because the erudites of the world have not yet detected such spiritual forces does not mean that they do not exist. In ways that we do not yet understand, part of the power that made the Liahona operable derived from the members of the company themselves. It is apparent as well, that there needed to be a degree of unity and harmony among the travelers

16.28.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

16.29 These specific instructions, perhaps given daily at times, were in addition to the vast trove of inspired writings which were contained on the Brass Plates. Continuous revelation adapts itself to the peculiar needs of those who are willing to live by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God.

16.29.7—*them*—In reference to the spindles and not to the entire orb of the Liahona itself. The word "pointers" is clearly the subject of the sentence and the antecedent for our pronoun here.

humbled themselves because of my words; for I did say many things unto them in the energy of my soul.

{*¶*—1830}

25 And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord came unto my father; and he was truly chastened because of his murmuring against the Lord, insomuch that he was brought down into the depths of sorrow.

26 And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord said unto him: Look upon the ball, and behold the things which are written.

27 And it came to pass that when my father beheld the things which were written upon the ball, he did fear and tremble exceedingly, and also my brethren and the sons of Ishmael and our wives.

{*¶*—1830}

28 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the pointers which were in the ball, that they did work according to the faith and diligence and heed which we did give unto them.

*29 And there was also written upon them a new writing, which was plain to be read, which did give us understanding concerning the ways of the Lord; and it was written and changed from time to time, according to the faith and diligence

1 Ne. 16:25
MD 122
DNTC 3:223
1 Ne. 16:26–29
EM 2:830
1 Ne. 16:26–30
AF 5
MD 440

1 Ne. 16:28
EM 4:1578
1 Ne. 16:28–29
PM 402

* p. 41
1 Ne. 16:29
CR99-A 36
CR01-O 61

16.29.55–56—*small means*—Is this in reference to the Liahona or to the matter of exercising faith, diligence, and giving heed to the revelations of God? Certainly one could make an argument for either one or both.

16.29.62–63—*great things*—In this particular case, one could easily point to the impending rescue of the house of Lehi through Nephi’s obedience to the instructions given on the spindles of the Liahona. One might also point to the increased determination of the various members of the family to keep the commandments of God as the Liahona led them along from place to place as a great thing as well.

16.30 Given an opportunity to exercise faith by giving heed and diligence to the writing on the Liahona, Nephi does as he had been directed. It is interesting that the Lord chose this manner of instruction, working through Lehi and the Liahona, rather than to deal with righteous Nephi directly. Clearly there were larger concerns at play here than the mere expediency of obtaining food.

16.30.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

16.30.18—*mountain*—It is a bootless exercise to speculate about where this mountain may have been.

16.31 We could expect nothing else but Nephi’s success; Nephi expected nothing else but success.

16.32 Whatever Nephi was able to obtain in the wilderness, the meat was sufficient to feed the entire company which we might conservatively estimate at twenty-five or thirty people. Humility and gratitude comes fairly easy on a full stomach.

16.33 The first encampment made by Lehi was in a valley which he called Lemuel. The second site the company chose to name Shazer. The third location remained nameless, perhaps due to the fact that their stop was imposed upon them by necessity. The fourth place they would call Nahom because of the death of Ishmael, the other patriarch of the company. These four points lay in almost a straight line paralleling the shore of the Red Sea for several hundreds of miles, a line that according to Nephi was south by southeast from the Valley of Lemuel. It might be possible to identify those camp sites if we only had a notion as to how the land of Arabia looked twenty-six hundred years ago, together with its topography and climate. Assuming that everything has remained constant during that time is the most egregious error that most archeologists and anthropologists make.

16.34 We are not told how or why Ishmael died. It could have been nothing

which we gave unto it. And thus we see that by small means the Lord can bring about great things.

{¶—1830}

30 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did go forth up into the top of the mountain, according to the directions which were given upon the ball.

31 And it came to pass that I did slay wild beasts, insomuch that I did obtain food for our families.

32 And it came to pass that I did return to our tents, bearing the beasts which I had slain; and now when they beheld that I had obtained food, how great was their joy! And it came to pass that they did humble themselves before the Lord, and did give thanks unto him.

{¶—1830}

33 And it came to pass that we did again take our journey, traveling nearly the same course as in the beginning; and after we had traveled for the space of many days we did pitch our tents again, that we might tarry for the space of a time.

{¶—1830}

34 And it came to pass that Ish-

1 Ne. 16:30–31
EM 2:827

1 Ne. 16:34

more than simple old age and exhaustion.

16.34.7—*Ishmael*—That Lehi and Ishmael were acquainted prior to this time seems certain. It would seem somewhat reasonable to assume also, that the sons of Lehi were acquainted with the children of Ishmael, at least casually.

16.34.18—*Nahom*—A word probably of Semitic origin which means “consolation”, deriving from roots which mean “sigh, breath strongly, be sorry, pity; rue, avenge, repent”.

16.35 The grief of the daughters of Ishmael was extreme, intensified no doubt by the circumstances in which the entire company found itself. Father Lehi becomes the focus of their despair and in their sorrow they utter unkind remarks which most likely would have embarrassed their father. Ishmael was the first of the conjoined families to die in the wilderness and the girls felt that this was a harbinger of that which would surely come to pass with the rest of them. One by one, they assumed, they would fall in the wilderness, just as the children of Israel had fallen in the wilderness of Sinai after their rebellion. Some of their sorrow undoubtedly derived from self-recrimination, that perhaps God was punishing them for their failure to live up to the covenants which they had made.

16.35.10—*Ishmael*—That Lehi and Ishmael were acquainted prior to this time seems certain. It would seem somewhat reasonable to assume also, that the sons of Lehi were acquainted with the children of Ishmael, at least casually.

16.35.46—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

16.36 Lehi and Nephi were the messengers of God. The daughters of Ishmael and the others were apparently reticent to murmur against God Himself, but they clearly had no compunction about giving His servants a tongue-lashing. The desire to return to Jerusalem was probably based on the premise that if they were going to die anyway, why not do so in comfort?

16.36.21—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

16.37 The four older men in the company formed their cabal by which they planned to facilitate the return to the land of Israel. This was, in essence, a secret combination by which they hoped to commit murder and get personal gain and power. Laman was still chaffing at his lost opportunities, by which his role in the leadership of the company had been considerably marginalized. His accusation against Nephi, that he had taken it upon himself to be their teacher and ruler, was a conceit designed to persuade the sons of Ishmael to join them against a “usurper”. Laman and Lemuel knew full well that Nephi’s role was divinely appointed.

mael died, and was buried in the place which was called Nahom.

35 And it came to pass that the daughters of Ishmael did mourn exceedingly, because of the loss of their father, and because of their afflictions in the wilderness; and they did murmur against my father, because he had brought them out of the land of Jerusalem, saying: Our father is dead; yea, and we have wandered much in the wilderness, and we have suffered much affliction, hunger, thirst, and fatigue; and after all these sufferings we must perish in the wilderness with hunger.

36 And thus they did murmur against my father, and also against me; and they were desirous to return again to Jerusalem.

37 And Laman said unto Lemuel and also unto the sons of Ishmael: Behold, let us slay our father, and also our brother Nephi, who has taken it upon him to be our ruler and our teacher, who are his elder brethren.

EM 1:144
EM 2:705
1 Ne. 16:34–35
MD 389
1 Ne. 16:34–39
EM 2:705

1 Ne. 16:35–36
MD 519
1 Ne. 16:36–38
EM 2:801
CR91-A 13
1 Ne. 16:37–38
MD 88
EM 1:188
CR99-O 5
1 Ne. 16:37–39
EM 1:141

16.37.2—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

16.37.5—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

16.37.12—*Ishmael*—That Lehi and Ishmael were acquainted prior to this time seems certain. It would seem somewhat reasonable to assume also, that the sons of Lehi were acquainted with the children of Ishmael, at least casually.

16.37.23—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

16.38 A thief thinks all men steal, and that aphorism is clearly proven by the onslaught of accusations leveled at Nephi by his brethren. Laman and Lemuel had been severely censured by an angel sent from God at the time they were attempting to beat Nephi and Sam senseless. Which cunning art was employed in the cave by Nephi just as he was descending into unconsciousness? The wicked will use every stratagem to delude themselves and those around them that the power exhibited by the righteous is a manifestation of cleverness or of the devil. The assertion of Laman that Nephi desired to make himself king over the company says more about Laman than it does about Nephi. Laman probably had no difficulty coming up with the abuses that a wicked king could perpetrate upon his subjects. Laman knew the kind of travesties would make his brother and the sons of Ishmael angry, and he harped on those until he had whipped them into a state of homicidal mania.

16.38.100—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

16.39 It is clear that the four men who had conspired against Lehi and Nephi were severely chastised by the voice of the Lord God of Israel. Laman and Lemuel had received rebukes from their father, an angel, and their younger brother. In each instance, they had eventually responded favorably for a time. In this present case, because of the nature of their rebellion and their determination to put members of their family to death, the Lord Himself intervened in no uncertain terms. We must conclude that each time the young men repented and then fell into their old ways, the intensity of their wickedness increased. It is a cautionary tale to say the least. Note that the last verse of Chapter 16 was originally part of the paragraph which contains the beginning of Chapter 17.

38 Now, he says that the Lord has talked with him, and also that angels have ministered unto him. But behold, we know that he lies unto us; and he tells us these things, and he worketh many things by his cunning arts, that he may deceive our eyes, thinking, perhaps, that he may lead us away into some strange wilderness; and after he has led us away, he has thought to make himself a king and a ruler over us, that he may do with us according to his will and pleasure. *And after this manner did my brother Laman stir up their hearts to anger.

{¶—1830}

39 And it came to pass that the Lord was with us, yea, even the voice of the Lord came and did speak many words unto them, and did chasten them exceedingly; and after they were chastened by the voice of the Lord they did turn away their anger, and did repent of their sins, insomuch that the Lord did bless us again with food, that we did not perish.

* p. 42

1 Ne. 16:39
MD 123
DNTEC 3:223

{Chapter V, continued}
(Chapter 17)

17.1 If their travels up to that point had been onerous, the families of Lehi and Ishmael were about to experience a desolation almost indescribable. Many scholars have speculated about where the eastward turn took place. Had the company been following the general track of the old incense trail their route would have taken them almost to the southwestern tip of Arabia. If they had turned east farther north, their journey would have been horrific, for they would have had to pass through the Empty Quarter, a desert of enormous proportions and oppressive conditions. The daughters of Ishmael and Sariah herself gave birth to children in this forbidding wilderness.

17.2 As will be discovered later in Nephi's narrative (see 17.12), the Lord had forbidden the company to make fires as they traveled from the valley of Lemuel to the land which they called Bountiful. Not only was their food to become sweet, even if eaten raw, so likewise they were not left in utter darkness in their journeys. We might speculate as to why the Lord should have given such a commandment, but as is generally the case with the Lord's instructions, those who receive revelation are seldom given the divine rationale behind the commandments. Nonetheless, many have taken in hand to explain the nature of the Lord's reasoning in this matter, suggesting that it was to protect the company from bandits who plied their trade all along the length of the Incense Road. We should not be surprised to discover that the Lord's motive was far more complex and beneficial than anything considerations we might devise.

17.3 The Lord God of Israel does not give commandments to his covenant people merely to test their willingness to obey. Every revelation that has been delivered into the hands of the children of men has been proffered so that the sons and daughters of God might draw near to their Father and be blessed by Him. Every commandment is a revelation about Himself. In terms of acquiring and maintaining faith, many of the adversities experienced by Lehi and his entourage provided extraordinary opportunities for personal and congregational growth in the spirit. Some members of the family did better than others.

17.4 Anthropologists and archeologists have proposed that a caravan traveling on the Incense Road could negotiate its length in a little over two months; sixty-two days to be precise. One is stunned at the eight-year trek of Lehi's family. When coupled with the principle that their journeys in the wilderness were governed by their united attention to the instructions of the Liahona (see 16.17–28), our astonishment is that they survived at all.

17.5 The place Bountiful had been prepared by the Lord, rather than by generations of inhabitants who dwelt upon that rich land. It would have seemed odd that such a bounteous location had not been settled prior to the company arriving there. What powers were brought to bear by the Lord God of Heaven to provide such a desirable location might only be imagined.

17.5.11—*Bountiful*—We do not know precisely where the land of Bountiful was, but it undoubtedly was somewhere on the southeastern coast of Arabia, given the directions supplied by Nephi himself. Many schol-

1 AND it came to pass that we did again take our journey in the wilderness; and we did travel nearly eastward from that time forth. And we did travel and wade through much affliction in the wilderness; and our women did bear children in the wilderness.

2 And so great were the blessings of the Lord upon us, that while we did live upon raw meat in the wilderness, our women did give plenty of suck for their children, and were strong, yea, even like unto the men; and they began to bear their journeyings without murmurings.

3 And thus we see that the commandments of God must be fulfilled. And if it so be that the children of men keep the commandments of God he doth nourish them, and strengthen them, and provide means whereby they can accomplish the thing which he has commanded them; wherefore, he did provide means for us while we did sojourn in the wilderness.

4 And we did sojourn for the space of many years, yea, even eight years in the wilderness.

5 And we did come to the land which we called Bountiful, because of its much fruit and also wild honey; and all these things were prepared of the Lord that we might not perish. And we beheld the sea, which we called Irreantum, which, being interpreted, is many waters.

1 Ne. 17
MD 489
EM 1:106, 141,
142, 145, 213
EM 3:1005
CR90-A 34
CR99-O 6
1 Ne. 17:1
EM 1:144
1 Ne. 17:1,20
EM 4:1579

1 Ne. 17:3
CR89-A 8

1 Ne. 17:4
EM 1:144
1 Ne. 17:4–5
EM 1:170

1 Ne. 17:5
EM 1:145, 187

ars have placed it within the present state of Oman. If conditions today reflect the conditions that existed twenty-six hundred years ago, then the speculation has some merit.

17.5.43—*Irreantum*—We know little about the body of water that startled the family of Lehi. Given the circumstances and the internal evidence of the Book of Mormon, it is easy to conclude that they were probably confronted with the northwestern lobe of the Indian Ocean.

17.6 For the first part of their journey, the members of Lehi's company had traveled southeast near the borders of the Red Sea and were apparently in view of that body of water for most of the time, even though they were in the wilderness. Once they turned eastward, however, the Red Sea was undoubtedly left behind. If they spent several years in their sojourn across the Arabian peninsula, the absence of the sea would have been hard to bear, especially if they were traversing the Empty Quarter. To emerge from that desolate wasteland into a place of verdure, natural fruits and plenteous fresh water would have been welcome relief to say the least. To look upon the vast beauty of the Indian Ocean after years of living in a sandy desert would have caused their hearts to leap within them for joy. We cannot exaggerate the contrast they experienced.

17.7 One is continually tempted to propose locations for the campsites established by Lehi and his family. Without going into the detailed reasoning here, we might consider the coastal mountain region immediately to the west of the modern city of Raysul in southwestern Oman (see 17.48).

17.7.9—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

17.7.16—*Bountiful*—We do not know precisely where the land of Bountiful was, but it undoubtedly was somewhere on the southeastern coast of Arabia, given the directions supplied by Nephi himself. Many scholars have placed it within the present state of Oman. If conditions today reflect the conditions that existed twenty-six hundred years ago, then the speculation has some merit.

17.7.21–22—*many days*—Again, it is difficult to estimate the amount of time that passed before the Lord called upon Nephi to receive further instructions as to what they should do to proceed in their travels to the promised land. With some justification we may surmise that the respite was at least six to eight weeks (see 16.16).

17.7.38—*mountain*—If, as many scholars have concluded, Lehi's family located themselves somewhere in what today is called the Emirate of Oman, any one of a number of mountains might be pointed to as the one where Nephi held his interview with the Lord God of Israel.

17.8 We are not told how much the Lord revealed to Lehi and Nephi regarding their journey to the promised land. It seems unlikely that the company would have been told that a two-month trek to the land of Bountiful would take them eight years to accomplish. As the Lord told his disciples in the Sermon on the Mount, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof". They did not need to be burdened with a foreknowledge of every trial and tribulation which would come to them. At what point did Nephi become aware that he would be required to construct a ship? It would be safe to assume that the

{*¶*—1830}

6 And it came to pass that we did pitch our tents by the seashore; and notwithstanding we had suffered many afflictions and much difficulty, yea, even so much that we cannot write them all, we were exceedingly rejoiced when we came to the seashore; and we called the place Bountiful, because of its much fruit.

{*¶*—1830}

7 And it came to pass that after I, Nephi, had been in the land of Bountiful for the space of many days, the voice of the Lord came unto me, saying: Arise, and get thee into the mountain. And it came to pass that I arose and went up into the mountain, and cried unto the Lord.

{*¶*—1830}

8 And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto me, saying: Thou shalt construct a ship, after the manner which I shall show thee, that I may carry thy people across these waters.

1 Ne. 17:7
CR91-O 87

1 Ne. 17:8
AF 5
CR84-A 96
CR86-O 92
CR91-O 87
CR97-A 103
1 Ne. 17:8–11
CR02-A 37

present commandment was the initial revelation. It is interesting that Nephi's experience thus far with the Lord God of Israel is such that he does not blanch or whine. He quickly realizes that there are necessities which cannot be satisfied without the Lord's intervention. The design of the ship would be forthcoming; the skill required to sail the craft would be provided as well. Nephi knew the entire inventory of his father's camp and while they had been prepared to dwell in the desert for a season, they were not presently equipped to mill the vast amount of timber that would clearly be required.

17.9 Nephi knew that he needed certain kinds of metals with which to fashion his tools. Where and when did Nephi acquire this understanding? All he needs is the ore, he tells the Lord. The smelting and forging of the tools to build the ship seems to be within his comprehension. At some point in his boyhood had the fourth son of Lehi been apprenticed to a blacksmith or some other metal worker? We may only surmise, but his ready acceptance of the tasks suggests that he was not devoid of experience.

17.10 If the construction of a seaworthy ship is rightly considered, the kind and number of tools required would have been substantial. Nephi would have had to obtain considerable iron ore, perhaps copper, tin and nickel ores as well, in order to prepare durable wood-fashioning tools.

17.11 Clearly Nephi knew what he was about in the construction of an appropriate smeltery and forge. He did not need to ask specific instructions as to how to build an effective bellows. That knowledge seemed to reside within his own mind although we may not at present know how he acquired that understanding. Modern survivalists would tell you of several methods for starting a fire with two stones. The two rocks are usually called the "handstone" and the "striker". The handstone is generally a pyrite of some kind, usually pentlandite. Strikers vary, but quartz is quite effective. With dry tinder and the appropriate stones, a good fire is relatively easy to establish in this fashion.

17.11.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

17.12 One might quibble about the Mosaic proscriptions about consuming blood and the family of Lehi partaking of raw flesh for the eight years they were in the wilderness. Under the Law, animals slaughtered for consumption were bled before cooking. One might wonder if there is any less blood in a piece of roasted meat than there is in a piece of raw flesh, if the animal had been prepared properly. Any residual blood is cooked with the flesh, but it remains blood nonetheless. Obviously, the original bleeding appears to be sufficient in either case. Additionally, we ought not to become peripatetic about any commandment given by the God of Israel to the family of Lehi regarding their culinary conduct.

17.13 How the sweetness of the flesh was brought to pass by the Lord God we do not know, but we ought not to doubt that the result was palatable. In what manner the Lord provided physical light, if necessary, in lieu of a campfire, we

*9 And I said: Lord, whither shall I go that I may find ore to smelt, that I may make tools to construct the ship after the manner which thou hast shown unto me?

10 And it came to pass that the Lord told me whither I should go to find ore, that I might make tools.

{~~9~~—1830}

11 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did make a bellows wherewith to blow the fire, of the skins of beasts; and after I had made a bellows, that I might have wherewith to blow the fire, I did smite two stones together that I might make fire.

12 For the Lord had not hitherto suffered that we should make much fire, as we journeyed in the wilderness; for he said: I will make thy food become sweet, that ye cook it not;

13 And I will also be your light in the wilderness; and I will prepare the way before you, if it so be that

* p. 43
1 Ne. 17:9
CR84-A 96
CR86-O 92
CR91-O 87
CR97-A 103

1 Ne. 17:11,16
CR91-O 87

1 Ne. 17:13
CR87-O 76
1 Ne. 17:13–14

are not told. But for eight years, those two effects, the sweetness and the light were daily testaments of the Lord's hand in their travels. As the divine evidence mounted, the negative attitude of Laman and Lemuel and their party becomes wondrous.

17.14 Once ensconced in the Americas, Lehi received a confirming revelation that the city and the temple of Jerusalem had been destroyed by the Babylonians (see 2 *NE-C 1.4*). Later generations would come in contact with the descendants of another group of exiles who made their way to the promised land by way of another route. This latter company witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem before they escaped with one of the sons of Zedekiah. Eventually, they established the city of Zarahemla, which would be discovered by Mosiah and his people as they escaped the maraudings of the Lamanites in their own land of Nephi (see *OM-C 1.13–15*). Thus, some four hundred years after the prophecy and revelation had been given to the family of Nephi, the perfect outward evidence was provided. Perhaps we ought to conclude that faith engendered by the Spirit of God is a far more immediate witness of the truth than waiting for tangible evidence for the pronouncements of God the Father and of His Son Jesus Christ through their chosen servants.

17.14.46—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

17.15 Nephi was successful in observing the mind and will of God because he was filled with faith which came through prayerful attendance to the words of the living prophets. Laman and Lemuel could have been the beneficiaries of the same blessings, but they consciously chose otherwise.

17.15.3—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

17.16 Nephi's success at devising the necessary equipment to fashion a ship is consistent with his efforts to do the Lord's will since discovering for himself that his father was a servant of God.

17.17 It is fascinating that the elder brothers paid no attention to Nephi's efforts to build a foundry and fabricate the tools that he was to use to build the ship. We might ask the question as to when, precisely, Nephi told the rest of his family that he had been commanded to build the craft. For Laman and Lemuel there was no need to build a ship. They no doubt had concluded that the land which they had called Bountiful was for them a sufficient promised land. There was food and shelter aplenty; for them there was no need to sail across the ocean to another as yet undisclosed land of promise.

17.18 With their surroundings like unto the Garden of Eden, where the fruit, game, and other commodities seemed to provide themselves, the thought of

ye shall keep my commandments; wherefore, inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments ye shall be led towards the promised land; and ye shall know that it is by me that ye are led.

14 Yea, and the Lord said also that: After ye have arrived in the promised land, ye shall know that I, the Lord, am God; and that I, the Lord, did deliver you from destruction; yea, that I did bring you out of the land of Jerusalem.

15 Wherefore, I, Nephi, did strive to keep the commandments of the Lord, and I did exhort my brethren to faithfulness and diligence.

{*¶*—1830}

16 And it came to pass that I did make tools of the ore which I did molten out of the rock.

17 And when my brethren saw that I was about to build a ship, they began to murmur against me, saying: Our brother is a fool, for he thinketh that he can build a ship; yea, and he also thinketh that he can cross these great waters.

18 And thus my brethren did complain against me, and were

CR99-A 84

1 Ne. 17:17
CR86-O 92
CR89-O 104

performing manual labor in order to leave such a providential place was ridiculous to Laman and Lemuel. Their faithlessness had been compounded by their ignorance and lassitude.

17.19 As is typical of the wicked, Laman and Lemuel misinterpret almost all that comes to their attention. Their inability to judge anything properly came from their unwillingness to consult with the God of Heaven through His Spirit. Therefore, they were left unto themselves, guided only by their outward senses. They despised all those who had partaken of the goodness of God, dismissing any attempt on the part of the faithful members of their family to instruct them in the workings of the spirit of God. When Nephi grieves at the hardness of the hearts of his brethren, the two older brothers conclude that his sorrow must be the result of their unwillingness to follow his instructions. They cannot conceive of his fraternal affection and concern because they of themselves have no such positive emotions.

17.19.9—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

17.20 It is unlikely that Nephi was moved in any fashion by this mocking comparison made between himself and his father. What were “foolish imaginations” to Laman and Lemuel, constituted the word of God to the little company. That Nephi was considered in harmony with his father was a great and welcome compliment indeed. It should be noted that Laman, Lemuel, and those of their ilk complain bitterly about their hardships, focusing on the physical inconveniences and tribulations wherein they felt abused. The righteous, however, focus on the promises which are fulfilled after the trials and tribulations have been dealt with faithfully. The mists of darkness last but a short time and then the obedient are given the privilege of partaking of the fruit of the Tree of Life to their everlasting joy and contentment. The faithful in Lehi’s family had passed through the same afflictions as the recalcitrant, but they bore those difficulties with grace and hope.

17.20.27—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

17.21 All that the two older brothers can think of are all of the losses that they think that they have suffered. Sacrifice is the abandonment of nearly worthless things for those things of eternal worth. Inasmuch as Laman and Lemuel cannot perceive the worth of the promises of God, they consider sacrifice to be nothing but loss. Happiness for them is leisure and comfort. Therefore, they withhold their aid from Nephi because they wish to enjoy the leisure and self-satisfaction that the land of Bountiful provided. Setting sail upon the waters toward the promised land would be for them hardly more than another in a

desirous that they might not labor, for they did not believe that I could build a ship; neither would they believe that I was instructed of the Lord.

{~~9~~—1830}

19 And now it came to pass that I, Nephi, was exceedingly sorrowful because of the hardness of their hearts; and now when they saw that I began to be sorrowful they were glad in their hearts, insomuch that they did rejoice over me, saying: We knew that ye could not construct a ship, for we knew that ye were lacking in judgment; wherefore, thou canst not accomplish so great a work.

20 And thou art like unto our father, led away by the foolish imaginations of his heart; yea, he hath led us out of the land of Jerusalem, and we have wandered in the wilderness for these many years; and our women have toiled, being big with child; and they have borne children in the *wilderness and suffered all things, save it were death; and it would have been better that they had died before they came out of Jerusalem than to have suffered these afflictions.

21 Behold, these many years we have suffered in the wilderness, which time we might have enjoyed our possessions and the land of our inheritance; yea, and we might have been happy.

1 Ne. 17:19
CR99-O 7

1 Ne. 17:20
CR89-A 29

* p. 44

1 Ne. 17:21
CR00-A 33

series of bad exchanges.

17.22 Laman and Lemuel lauded a people whom God Himself had condemned through His chosen servants, Jeremiah and Lehi. Their “knowledge” betrayed their own wickedness. They testified against themselves, revealing their own lack of spirituality by suggesting that the Jews were in complete harmony with the Law of Moses and the Lord God of Israel. It is ironic that they would then speak ill of their own father in such harsh terms, inasmuch as the Law forbade any such thing. To rise up against one’s own patriarch, was a capital crime in ancient Israel. The brothers had refused to be spiritually influenced by the righteous and as a result descended deeper into the morass of the fallen world, being carnal, sensual, and finally devilish.

17.22.13—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

17.22.37—*Moses*—We have no idea how Amram and Jochebed referred to their son by name. This given by the princess, however, essentially is a reference to his deliverance from the Nile. In its elemental form, the name of the prophet means “is born”. The cognate in Hebrew means “drew him out”.

17.23 Referring Laman and Lemuel to the experiences of the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai was an apt comparison. After the exodus from Egypt, the Israelites suffered a series of hardships which tested their resolve to keep the commandments. They were spared time and again from desperate circumstances. The passage through the Red Sea, the sweetening of the waters of Marah, the provision of manna and quail, waters in the midst of a hostile desert, and other miraculous blessings attended their travels notwithstanding their hesitant and oft-times faithless grumbling. A whole generation was to fall in the wilderness because of the inordinate fear expressed regarding the giants in the land of Hebron. The children of Israel would spend forty years weltering in the desolation of Sinai when they could have entered into the land of Canaan within the first year after their escape from the Egyptians. But they would not be guided by the Lord or His servants. They balked and trembled at every whisper of opposition or request for obedience. They ultimately forfeited the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Melchizedek Priesthood and in their place were given the lesser priesthood and the preparatory gospel as couched in the Law of Moses. Laman and Lemuel had accused Nephi and his father of being fools, but they were demonstrating an historical folly described in some detail in the sacred texts of the Hebrews. Nephi’s central point in his argument to his brothers had to do with faithful obedience to the word of God, whether in the scriptures, by the mouth of living prophets, or by the whisperings of the still, small voice that is the Spirit of God.

17.23.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

17.23.24—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have

22 And we know that the people who were in the land of Jerusalem were a righteous people; for they kept the statutes and judgments of the Lord, and all his commandments, according to the law of Moses; wherefore, we know that they are a righteous people; and our father hath judged them, and hath led us away because we would hearken unto his words; yea, and our brother is like unto him. And after this manner of language did my brethren murmur and complain against us.

{*¶*—1830}

23 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, spake unto them, saying: Do ye believe that our fathers, who were the children of Israel, would have been led away out of the hands of the Egyptians if they had not hearkened unto the words of the Lord?

1 Ne. 17:22
CR89-O 104

1 Ne. 17:23
EM 2:705
1 Ne. 17:23–31
EM 1:106

been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

17.23.36—*Egyptians*—The inhabitants of the land naturally watered by the Nile River, the delta region of the same being luxuriant as one could hope for in terms of animal and vegetable life.

17.24 The Israelites escaped from the clutches of the Egyptians because they hearkened to the voice of the Lord through His servant Moses. Lehi and his family would escape slavery and destruction upon the same principles. They were not ultimately safe in the land of Bountiful any more than the children of Israel were safe on the western shore of the Red Sea. The children of Israel were so thoroughly enslaved to the Egyptians that they could no longer think in terms of freedom until the prophet Moses entered in among them to stir them up to the true worship of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It was as if they had been awakened from a deep sleep, Moses was not motivated by greed, power, or infamy. He was a humble servant who desired no more than to please God the Father. The Lord God had given Moses charge of the entire House of Israel, and sent him into their midst to bring them out of servitude. The lethargy of Laman and Lemuel was associated with their own slavery. Theirs was a slavery to their bellies, their lusts, their desires for ascendancy within the family organization. When they were frustrated in any of these things, they carped as soundly as any Israelite in the days of Moses and Aaron.

17.24.20—*Moses*—We have no idea how Amram and Jochebed referred to their son by name. This given by the princess, however, essentially is a reference to his deliverance from the Nile. In its elemental form, the name of the prophet means “is born”. The cognate in Hebrew means “drew him out”.

17.25 Had Lehi and his family remained in Jerusalem, slavery would have been the best that would have been possible. The Babylonians were a ruthless and vengeful people. In their estimation, the Jews had conducted themselves in a duplicitous and tactless manner, for the which they were to pay the ultimate price. To escape from that destruction of body, mind, and soul was also a “good thing”.

17.25.8—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

17.26 Laman and Lemuel knew the story of the exodus and, to a certain degree, believed that which they had been taught by their parents. They apparently held Moses in high esteem and, like many who were taught the stories of the Old Testament in their youth, took satisfaction in the fact that their ancestors had bested the most learned and powerful nation in the world at the time. The miracle performed on the shores of the Red Sea would have been common knowledge among the members of Lehi’s company.

17.26.5—*Moses*—We have no idea how Amram and Jochebed referred to their son by name. This given by the princess, however, essentially is a reference to his deliverance from the Nile. In its elemental form, the name of the prophet means “is born”. The cognate in Hebrew means “drew him out”.

17.26.27–28—*Red Sea*—That is to say, that tongue of the Egyptian sea that separates Egypt from the Sinai peninsula. The southern border of Israel.

24 Yea, do ye suppose that they would have been led out of bondage, if the Lord had not commanded Moses that he should lead them out of bondage?

25 Now ye know that the children of Israel were in bondage; and ye know that they were laden with tasks, which were grievous to be borne; wherefore, ye know that it must needs be a good thing for them, that they should be brought out of bondage.

26 Now ye know that Moses was commanded of the Lord to do that great work; and ye know that by his word the waters of the Red Sea were divided hither and thither, and they passed through on dry ground.

1 Ne. 17:26–27
DNTC 3:214
CR86-O 92

17.27 One wonders at the many miracles which had taken place as Lehi's family had journeyed from the Valley of Lemuel to the land of Bountiful. Some of these Nephi articulates in his narrative. How many close calls had they experienced in the wilderness? How many brushes with bandits or other hostile peoples had they endured? How many of them could be easily compared to the experiences of the children of Israel as they passed out of Jewish history? The conflict with Laban and his servants as the sons of Lehi attended to the retrieval of the Brass Plates was no less intimidating then the requirements placed upon the children of Israel as they departed their indentured service to the Egyptians. Food and drink were provided to both bodies of believers. Both were guided by divine signs and tokens as they labored in their respective wildernesses. Children were born and raised in the desert under great hardships, yet by so doing, the will of the Lord God of Israel was being perfected in the hearts and minds of the Israelites. So likewise, Laman and Lemuel, and indeed the entire family of Lehi, should have looked upon their experiences as opportunities for spiritual growth, rather than afflictions to be borne.

17.27.6—*Egyptians*—The inhabitants of the land naturally watered by the Nile River, the delta region of the same being luxuriant as one could hope for in terms of animal and vegetable life.

17.27.11–12—*Red Sea*—That is to say, that tongue of the Egyptian sea that separates Egypt from the Sinai peninsula. The southern border of Israel.

17.27.18—*Pharaoh*—From the very beginning of the establishment of the Egyptian people, the king of the Egypt was called Pharaoh, perhaps in honor of the first king whose given name was such. This practice continued until the Greek conquest of Egypt after which the kings were called Ptolemy, in honor of the Greek conqueror himself.

17.28 The provisions and preparations of man may be exhausted, but the blessings of the Lord are eternal and continuously forthcoming to the faithful. Whether it be manna that appeared in the morning or directions given by the Liahona where to find meat for the family, the principle is the same. The Lord provides for His own.

17.28.10—*manna*—The Hebrew roots from which this word has been transliterated into English literally mean “What is this?” The Israelites did not know what the substance was, neither did their children. It seems preposterous that we, more than three thousand years later, can pretend to state with authority that we know. This is unmitigated arrogance.

17.29 The guidance of the Liahona was not restricted to locating fresh game or merely the means by which the general direction the company should travel in the wilderness. The Incense Road was well-marked and well-traveled. The springs, wells, and oases were strategically placed along that trail so that those who navigated the wilderness might have plenty of water for themselves and for their draft animals. Lehi and his company, however, made their way southward on a path singularly different from the Incense Road. It may very well have been that they were blazing their own course as they made their way to the land of Bountiful. Traveling through this undeveloped desert terrain would have posed a tremendous problem for locating adequate water sources in a land already explored for such. Whether Nephi or Lehi were ever called upon to strike a rock in order to obtain a viable water source, we do not know. But that they were divinely guided to hitherto undiscovered or unfrequented

27 But ye know that the Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea, who were the armies of Pharaoh.

28 And ye also know that they were fed with manna in the wilderness.

29 Yea, and ye also know that Moses, by his word according to the power of God which was in him, smote the rock, and there came forth water, that the children of Israel might quench their thirst.

1 Ne. 17:28–30,
32
CR86-O 92

springs and brooks by the Liahona, there can be no question.

17.29.7—*Moses*—We have no idea how Amram and Jochebed referred to their son by name. This given by the princess, however, essentially is a reference to his deliverance from the Nile. In its elemental form, the name of the prophet means “is born”. The cognate in Hebrew means “drew him out”.

17.29.33—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

17.30 Lehi’s family was commanded not to have campfires of any kind. For that reason they ate their food virtually raw. By the same token, they suffered the natural darkness of the desert every night for eight years. The Lord testified that he would be their light in the wilderness (see 17.13). We do not know whether this was a physical reality or a metaphysical one. The effect, however, would have been essentially the same. Did the group travel during the daylight hours or at night? If the latter, certainly they would not have carried fire-brands with them to be forewarned of any geological or topographical hazards that might have endangered them. Notwithstanding any night-time dangers that might have impeded Lehi and his family as they travel in the darkness, the Liahona would have been the perfect guide, giving them guidance as if they had journeyed at midday. Laman and Lemuel would have been privy to all of this, an eight-year daily experience with the power and influence of God in their lives. Yet, like the Israelites of old, they too hardened their hearts against the righteous in order to cover their own iniquity, to avoid the inconveniences of faith and repentance. Hence, the easy manner in which Laman and Lemuel criticized their father and younger brother.

17.30.50—*Moses*—We have no idea how Amram and Jochebed referred to their son by name. This given by the princess, however, essentially is a reference to his deliverance from the Nile. In its elemental form, the name of the prophet means “is born”. The cognate in Hebrew means “drew him out”.

17.31 When the Israelites shrank in fear from possessing the land of Canaan after the twelve spies returned from the city of Hebron, the Lord testified against them, telling them that for every day the spies sojourned in the Promised Land, the children of Israel would spend a year in the wilderness of Sinai, until all who were over the age of twenty had passed into the world of spirits. At various times and in various places, portions of the House of Israel would rise up in rebellion against Moses the prophet. Punishments were affixed to each of these rebellions. Some were swallowed up by the earth, others were poisoned by hoards of venomous serpents, still others lost their lives during the many internal and external conflicts which arose as they wandered in the wilderness. The Lord had given the children of Israel a strict code of conduct and when they departed from that rigid law, punishment was swift and severe.

17.32 We do not know precisely how much Lehi and Nephi had been told about the Jaredites who still possessed the land of their inheritances. The descendants of those who had been led to the Americas from the confusion of tongues at the tower of Babel were in the final throes of self-destruction, yet they lived. Had that fact been communicated to the entire family? Were the elder brothers and others concerned about the possibility of having to deal

30 And notwithstanding they being led, the Lord their God, their Redeemer, going before them, leading them by day and giving light unto them by night, and doing all things for them which were expedient for man to receive, they hardened their hearts and blinded their minds, and reviled against Moses and against the true and living God.

{~~9~~—1830}

31 And it came to pass that according to his word he did destroy them; and according to his word he did lead them; and according to his word he did do all things for them; and *there was not any thing done save it were by his word.

32 And after they had crossed the river Jordan he did make them mighty unto the driving out of the children of the land, yea, unto the scattering them to destruction.

1 Ne. 17:30
JC 13, 38
CR90-O 33

* p. 45

1 Ne. 17:32,41
CR86-O 92

directly with those who formerly inhabited all of the land that was to be Lehi's inheritance? The Jaredites were a mighty race, perhaps physically like unto the sons of Anak who had frightened many of the men who had gone up from the camp of Israel to spy out the land. Nephi's position was unequivocal. Whether they be great or small, it is of no moment. As the Canaanites were driven from the land so that the Israelites might settle there, so also would the family of Lehi obtain their land of inheritance. The Lord God of Israel had declared it so.

17.32.8—*Jordan*—The major portion of the Jordan river is located between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. The track of the river is about seventy miles. The west side of the Jordan bordered the provinces of Judea, Decapolis, and Galilee. The east side bordered the provinces of Perea and Decapolis. North of the Sea of Galilee the Jordan continued northward to Lake Semechonitis. Several tributaries of the Jordan wend their way several miles more to the north.

17.33 The Canaanites and those among them, like the sons of Anak, had been given an opportunity to be as righteous as they had desired to be. They had chosen wickedness over righteousness, however. They had slaughtered the prophets rather than hearken to them. The Jaredites were dying from within. Their civilization had failed because they had failed to live up to the spiritual knowledge which had been revealed unto them. The Canaanites were driven out when they had ripened in iniquity and when the children of Israel had waxed stronger in their determination to obey God and His servants. The same was true of the Jaredites. So long as they maintained more righteousness among themselves than the family of Lehi, Nephi and his brothers would be held at bay. This, in part, explains why Lehi's company weltered in the wilderness for nearly eight years longer than necessary. Had they been consistently unified, their journey would have been considerably shortened.

17.34 Blessings of God are given in a timely fashion, in accordance with the principles of righteousness. Abraham and his posterity had been given the land of Palestine as a perpetual inheritance, but the promise would not be fulfilled until those who dwelt upon the land were less righteous than the children of Israel. What must have been frustrating to Moses and Aaron was the distressing fact that the Israelites seemed to be doing everything to disqualify themselves to possess the Promised Land. The Canaanites would sink into depravity by the weight of their own perverted life style, while the Israelites would plummet themselves into the fountain of filthy waters with wild abandon. Lehi and Nephi must have been experiencing the same frustration with the rebellious within their extended family.

17.35 The sons and daughters of God, wherever and whenever they may be found are entitled to growth and eventual regeneration. From among the vast ranks of humanity, certain children seek more than the blessings of the earth. They search for the blessings of eternal life and exaltation. Like Abraham, these faithful enter into solemn covenants which bless them as individuals and provide specific opportunities for their posterity. These chosen or covenant people, having once been enlightened, are not only peculiarly blessed, but are also given great responsibilities regarding the spiritual and temporal welfare of the rest of mankind. The nature of this fallen world is such that all who dwell here are susceptible to the weaknesses of the flesh. Needless to say, when the covenant people drag their heels in their pursuit of heaven, their chastisement is somewhat more severe than when they ignorant indulge themselves. God

33 And now, do ye suppose that the children of this land, who were in the land of promise, who were driven out by our fathers, do ye suppose that they were righteous? Behold, I say unto you, Nay.

34 Do ye suppose that our fathers would have been more choice than they if they had been righteous? I say unto you, Nay.

35 Behold, the Lord esteemeth all flesh in one; he that is righteous is favored of God. But behold, this people had rejected every word of God, and they were ripe in iniquity; and the fulness of the wrath of God was upon them; and the Lord did curse the land against them, and bless it unto our fathers; yea, he did curse it against them unto their destruction, and he did bless it unto our fathers unto their

1 Ne. 17:33–35
EM 2:463
1 Ne. 17:33–38
EM 1:378

1 Ne. 17:35
EM 1:10
EM 4:1598
CR01-A 56
CR87-O 30

the Father cannot countenance the least degree of sin in any of His children. When the Canaanites rejected the prophets, seers, and revelators who came in among them, they propelled themselves down a steep decline into oblivion. This descent into hell transpires to all who will not hearken to the authorized servants of the Most High. Laman and Lemuel had already crested the brink and were rapidly descending into needless sorrow and abject misery.

17.36 The selection of covenant peoples serves as an archetype for every man, woman, and child who is born into this world. The eventual destiny of this sphere is exaltation. It already has proven itself worthy to be included with the Celestial worlds on high. Those, therefore, who would have an inheritance with the faithful, who would dwell upon this earth in its glorified state, must needs accept those principles and ordinances which qualify one for inclusion. Everyone is invited. Those dwelling upon the earth when the eternal changes take place, the death and resurrection of the earth, will have already entered into the Celestial covenants or they will be swept from the earth as were the Canaanites and the Jaredites when they had ripened in iniquity through disobedience and rebellion.

17.37 In the case of the Canaanites, the instrument of their destruction was primarily the Israelites. In the case of the Jaredites, the destruction came from within as they fought among themselves to annihilation. Regardless of the measures taken, it is the decree of God that allows such destructions to take place. The good land will not lie fallow; the Lord will bring a more tractable people in to possess the land.

17.38 One may wonder at the desire of the Father to bring covenant peoples to the richest of all lands. Without dealing in details, we may say that there are godly reasons for doing so besides mere divine favoritism. In part, the outward blessings of the righteous constitute signs and tokens to the world that following the path of happiness does bring a degree of temporal comfort. All prosperity, however, is not the product of righteousness and so the wicked may easily point to miscreants who seem to be doing well in the world. Therefore, the temporal blessings do not solely serve as an indication of proper conduct. The temporal blessings are also indicative of spiritual wellbeing, a heart and mind prepared to be of service to others in need. The covenant people are given a charge to provide for those around them. In part, relative personal wealth makes that possible. In the aggregate, the people of God have the responsibility to instruct the world in righteousness. The practical necessities of life are often provided through temporal wealth so that that charge might be accomplished. The erstwhile righteous, however, who glut themselves on the means that have been given them to bless the world, will face dire consequences. The wealth of the wicked is likewise ephemeral, though for different reasons.

17.39 Nothing in this life can be permanently claimed by any inhabitant. The Father and the Son are the creators of this world. They assembled the ingredients and brought forth organization, establishing life in every sphere of existence. All of creation is theirs to dispose of at their pleasure. All things, however, have been done for the benefit of the spirit children of God, who have been sent here to learn for themselves how to live in a Celestial community. Those who grasp at the supposed benefits of this planet in order to exalt themselves above their fellows, that they might exercise power and dominion over them, will not have learned the divine lessons which were devised for

obtaining power over it.

36 Behold, the Lord hath created the earth that it should be inhabited; and he hath created his children that they should possess it.

1 Ne. 17:36
EM 1:340
EM 2:485
CR88-O 101
1 Ne. 17:36–40
EM 1:331

37 And he raiseth up a righteous nation, and destroyeth the nations of the wicked.

1 Ne. 17:37
EM 2:773

38 And he leadeth away the righteous into precious lands, and the wicked he destroyeth, and curseth the land unto them for their sakes.

39 He ruleth high in the heavens, for it is his throne, and this earth is his footstool.

mortal men. We must remember who we are and the precise relationship which we have with Heaven.

17.40 Blessings came to the House of Israel in Egypt, not because of their personal righteousness, but as a result of the covenants which had been made with their ancestors, specifically Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It is unlikely that Laman and Lemuel were as concerned about welfare of their posterity as they were about their own creature comforts. God does not indulge in favoritism among His children, but He does make a distinction when evaluating the things that they do, especially to one another. We may say that He loves His children when they are obedient, but His concern for the welfare of all His children has not changed one whit. God loves righteousness, that which enhances the advancement of one of His children to become more like unto Himself. He is infinitely happy and desires that all of His progeny be possessed of the same joy. When a child progresses such that the Father may pour out more blessings and opportunities upon him, the happiness of our Father is intensified. When a child rebels, he is not loved less, but the sorrow felt by the God of Heaven is as poignant as His joy for righteousness.

17.40.25—*Abraham*—The undisputed “Father of the Faithful”. Modern biblical scholars are generally kind to Abraham as are most theologians in the sister religious of Judaism. The spiritual stature of Abraham is, for the most part, immeasurable by man. Abraham is one of the Lord God’s noblemen, whose faith and confidence in the divine word are equaled or excelled by few who have come into mortality upon this earth. Removing the Lord Jesus Christ from the list of candidates, however, would probably render our estimation of Abraham all but absolute. Abraham was one of three sons born to Terah during a millennium of poverty and famine. Through Abraham’s ministrations the promises made to the ancient fathers were preserved and re-established in earnest. In one of the most tender of moments recorded in secular or ecclesiastical history, the Lord God of Heaven instructed Abraham in the nature of the greatest gift that a loving God may bestow upon his creation when he asked for the sacrificed life of his son Isaac.

17.40.26—*Isaac*—The only son of the union between Abraham and Sarah. There was some strife between Isaac and Ishmael, the son of Hagar, as there had been between Sarah and her handmaiden who had been elevated to the role of wife to Abraham as the result of Sarah’s barrenness. Because Sarah was the first wife, the wife of the covenant, her son Isaac took precedence over the elder half-brother. The animosity engendered during those early years has not completely abated, even into modern times. Isaac was an active participant in the “sacrifice” required by God of his father Abraham.

17.40.28—*Jacob*—The younger of the twin sons born to Isaac and Rebecca. The elder son, Esau, despised his spiritual inheritance by marrying outside of the perpetual covenant established between God and his grandfather Abraham. The lot fell to the faithful Jacob who was then forced to flee for his life. Jacob’s name was changed to Israel, and with his four wives founded the House of Israel, that covenant family by whom the entire population of the earth was to be instructed and redeemed.

17.40.48—*Egypt*—A land naturally watered by the Nile River, the delta region of the same being luxuriant as one could hope for in terms of animal and vegetable life.

40 And he loveth those who will have him to be their God. Behold, he loved our fathers, and he covenanted with them, yea, even Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and he remembered the covenants which he had made; wherefore, he did bring them out of the land of Egypt.

1 Ne. 17:40
JC 48
CR99-A 86

17.41 If Laman and Lemuel had been dense enough to have missed the point that Nephi was making, they are clearly equated with the rebellious of Israel who had hardened their hearts against God and His servants. The promise had been made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that their posterity would be given every opportunity to forsake the world and adhere to the principles that they had sought for all of their lives. Lehi, as well, had received such a promise. For that reason, the House of Israel was dealt with in a strenuous way, afflicted by the justice of God so that they might come to their senses and walk uprightly before God. Until they sought for mercy, they would bear the burdens of the Law. Laman and Lemuel were pointed in the very direction that rebellious Israel had taken centuries before, and Nephi was giving them fair warning. The Israelites were ultimately presented with a decision. They could either die of the venom of the poisonous serpents which had come in among them, or they could humble themselves and look unto God and live. Their prophet gave them the simplest of tasks to perform, to merely look upon the brazen serpent that he had placed upon a pole and they would live. To despise the sign, to turn away in rebellion and hard heartedness, to intellectualize themselves into the world of spirits, was their privilege, but they would rue that decision when faced with the eternal consequences of their recalcitrant behavior. As the Israelites faced the violent effects of the fiery serpents, Laman and Lemuel would get the shock of their lives, literally, as they learned once again that there were powers in the universe which their limited world view could not explain.

17.42 Traveling with Laman and Lemuel was an emotional and spiritual rollercoaster ride. They vilified everyone around them until they were caught up short by their father, the angel, their brother, and the voice of the Lord. It appears that they were spiritually deficient enough that they could not remember from one moment to the next that their chastisement had been divinely administered, regardless of the agent involved. They went through a semblance of repentance, a sorrow of sorts which rapidly faded into forgetfulness, a renewed insensitivity of the heart, mind, and soul. Laman and Lemuel must have convinced themselves, having arrived in the land of Bountiful, that their conduct was acceptable to all, just as the Israelites had excused their own conduct because of what seemed to be virtual successes in their liberation from the Egyptians. "Thus far, and no further" was their cry. They did not wish to come into the presence of the Lord God and bade Moses to be their intermediary. They did not wish to be troubled by that which they would have to do in order to be prepared to enter into the presence of deity. For that they were severely chastened, they and their posterity.

17.42.16—*Moses*—We have no idea how Amram and Jochebed referred to their son by name. This given by the princess, however, essentially is a reference to his deliverance from the Nile. In its elemental form, the name of the prophet means "is born". The cognate in Hebrew means "drew him out".

17.43 Laman and Lemuel had identified themselves with the residents of Jerusalem when they testified that they "knew" that the Jews were acceptable before God (see 17.22). Nephi's reply was that the Jews had spent nearly a millennium in one rebellion after another. Jeremiah, Lehi, and a host of other prophets had been sent to the covenant people that they might repent and avoid the impending destruction being orchestrated by the Babylonians. As the Canaanites, Jaredites, and other disobedient peoples had been swept off the land of their inheritance, so also would the Kingdom of Judah be reduced

41 And he did straiten them in the wilderness with his rod; for they hardened their hearts, even as ye have; and the Lord straitened them because of their iniquity. He sent fiery flying serpents among them; and after they were bitten he prepared a way that they might be healed; and the labor which they had to perform was to look; and because of the simpleness of the way, or the easiness of it, there were many who perished.

42 And they did harden their hearts from time to time, and they did revile against Moses, and also against God; nevertheless, ye know that they were led forth by his matchless power into the land of promise.

43 And now, after all these things, the time has come that they have become wicked, yea, nearly unto ripeness; and I know not but they are at this day about to be destroyed; for I know that the day must surely come that they must be destroyed, save a few only, who

1 Ne. 17:41
PM 400
CR86-A 44, 46
CR94-A 121
CR94-O 108

to rubble, the citizens thereof slain or enslaved. Nephi assured his elder brothers that they are holding with bad company when they sided with the Jews who dwelt in the doomed city of Jerusalem.

17.44 Laman and Lemuel were oblivious to their own perilous circumstances, just as the Jews thought themselves secure in their relationship with the Babylonians and the Egyptians. Insofar as the testimony of his elder brothers in favor of the Jews was concerned, Nephi bears witness against them, that they are like unto the inhabitants of Jerusalem and environs, inasmuch as the wicked have no compunction about taking the lives of those around them whose voices of reason and righteousness upset their illusion that their course of action in life is proper. The homicidal manifestation of their subsequent anger would prove the point.

17.44.16—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

17.45 Laman and Lemuel are consumed by the temptations of the flesh, so obsessed by the concerns of this mortal frame that they no longer sense divine instruction in the manner that was designed to bring souls unto Christ. The angel must appear, the voice of the Lord God must shake the ground before they respond in any fashion. The still small voice that inspired Elijah and all of the prophets of God is lost on them, so hardened have their hearts become. Therefore, they can expect only misery and hard times.

17.46 Again, we might ask ourselves what specific experiences had Laman and Lemuel had in their travels that would give rise to this reminder by Nephi. Had their path in the wilderness been facilitated by some of these miraculous events? Had their potential enemies been put at a disadvantage because of the Lord's manipulation of the geography? In its current form, the Old Testament does not make mention of these sorts of things happening during the history of Israel up to the time of Lehi's departure from Jerusalem.

17.47 This expression of spiritual sorrow is lost on Nephi's brothers, but they do understand that Nephi has professed physical weakness. Laman and Lemuel may have been able to take advantage of Nephi when he was a younger man, but full grown he was a force to be reckoned with. Knowing that for whatever reason Nephi might not be able to defend himself, the two men sought to destroy him.

17.48 One might be tempted to suggest that it is Nephi's candor that enflames Laman and Lemuel. The truth is, however, that it is Laman and Lemuel's wickedness that enflames them. Nephi has clearly described that the source of

shall be led away into captivity.

*44 Wherefore, the Lord commanded my father that he should depart into the wilderness; and the Jews also sought to take away his life; yea, and ye also have sought to take away his life; wherefore, ye are murderers in your hearts and ye are like unto them.

45 Ye are swift to do iniquity but slow to remember the Lord your God. Ye have seen an angel, and he spake unto you; yea, ye have heard his voice from time to time; and he hath spoken unto you in a still small voice, but ye were past feeling, that ye could not feel his words; wherefore, he has spoken unto you like unto the voice of thunder, which did cause the earth to shake as if it were to divide asunder.

46 And ye also know that by the power of his almighty word he can cause the earth that it shall pass away; yea, and ye know that by his word he can cause the rough places to be made smooth, and smooth places shall be broken up. O, then, why is it, that ye can be so hard in your hearts?

47 Behold, my soul is rent with anguish because of you, and my heart is pained; I fear lest ye shall be cast off forever. Behold, I am full of the Spirit of God, insomuch that my frame has no strength.

{*¶*—1830}

48 And now it came to pass that when I had spoken these words they were angry with me, and were

* p. 46
1 Ne. 17:44–45
CR01-O 78

1 Ne. 17:45
FPM 208
EM 1:182, 385
CR82-A 36
CR89-O 16
CR91-A 14, 32,
48
CR91-O 26, 28
CR93-A 95
CR94-A 13
CR94-O 80
CR95-A 89
CR97-A 43
CR98-O 16, 51
CR99-A 29
CR00-O 4
CR01-O 98

1 Ne. 17:47
MD 38

1 Ne. 17:48
MD 30

his brothers' unhappiness in the wilderness and their unwillingness to help with the ship is their lack of spirituality, their inability to sense the promptings of the Holy Ghost. This lack of facility with the things of the Spirit has come because of their pride, their bristling at having been passed over in favor of a younger brother. Their injured pride was a result of their failure to do even the simplest of tasks. They did not pray to God the Father in the beginning of their adventures, and they would not seek further light and knowledge from the divine source once they encountered principles that were difficult for them to understand. They thought themselves wise, far more learned and experienced than the other members of their family, and were willing to commit murder that their limited views might be imposed upon their fellows without criticism

17.48.30—*sea*—This is as puzzling an episode as we might find in the Book of Mormon. There is as yet no ship. How does one go about fatally casting an adversary into the depths of the sea? The resolution is relatively simple when one considers the potential geography in southern Arabia. In the commentary above regarding the location of the land of Bountiful (see 17.6–7), it was suggested that the possible site for the resting place for Lehi's family may have been near the modern city of Raysul in Oman. One of the primary reasons for recommending that place had to do with the range of mountains to the west of that city. This is almost the only place in southern Arabia where there are great precipices which overlook the ocean. Would it not be reasonable to assume that Laman and Lemuel wished to cast Nephi into the sea from one of these heights, the fall from which would bring Nephi to his death? There may be other likely sites for such a premeditated murder, but for the present this seems the most appealing.

17.48.59–61—*touch me not*—There is more than Nephi's words in operation here. His brothers quailed before him. One wonders if there were other manifestations which struck fear into the hearts of Nephi's assailants. Abinadi's martyrdom was postponed considerably because of the brightening of his countenance, an effect produced by the power of God which was within him. Perhaps Nephi's face shone with "exceeding luster" as did Abinadi's before King Noah and his priests. This would have been the perfect witness to Laman and Lemuel inasmuch as Nephi had just recounted the history of rebellious Israel in the wilderness of Sinai. The children of Israel were likewise terrified of Moses' countenance, so much so that Moses was required to wear a veil over his face for a time. The mere threat of death would have been insufficient. The sign of impending death would have given the two brothers pause indeed.

17.49 Each time Laman and Lemuel rebelled against the light and knowledge which had been given to them, they descended deeper and deeper into spiritual insensitivity. In order to bring them into a state of productivity, each successive "re-awakening" had to be of a more strident order. The voice of their father in the valley of Lemuel, the fearsome appearance of the angel of the Lord, the words of God Himself, and finally the presentation of Nephi as a true Lawgiver. The Law from that time forward was a call to repentance, a call to end their slothfulness and rebellion.

17.49.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally

desirous to throw me into the depths of the sea; and as they came forth to lay their hands upon me I spake unto them, saying: In the name of the Almighty God, I command you that ye touch me not, for I am filled with the power of God, even unto the consuming of my flesh; and whoso shall lay his hands upon me shall wither even as a dried reed; and he shall be as naught before the power of God, for God shall smite him.

{*¶*—1830}

49 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, said unto them that they should murmur no more against their father; neither should they withhold their labor from me, for God had commanded me that I should build a ship.

known as Nephites.

17.50 As the brothers had been commanded to resort to Jerusalem for the Brass Plates and for the family of Ishmael, so also were they now commanded to build a ship of the Lord's own design that the company might make their way speedily to the land of their inheritance. Through all of the various tasks and assignments that the Lord had given to him, through all of the trials and tribulations through which he had passed, Nephi's faith and confidence in the word of the Lord to him was perfected. His initial commitment to his father that he would and could do all that the God of Heaven commanded had been justified time and again. Nothing that the Lord required was impossible.

17.51 A simple matter indeed, to instruct a willing heart and mind of a contrite and obedient servant. If it had been the Lord's will, the little company could have walked the entire distance from southern Arabia to Chile. Nephi knew that was possible. How much better to sail the distance? How much more efficient to teach a young man how to build the tools by which the waters might be traverse with some comfort?

17.52 Nephi was being neither pompous nor tiresome here. He was attempting to wrest the souls of his brethren from the depths of hell. Laman and Lemuel were filled with a blazing anger which had been overwhelmed by an abject and paralyzing fear. Having reproved his brethren with sharpness, he was required to show forth an increase of love for them. Nephi was no autocrat. He was a loving sibling who desired only the very best for each member of his family, and the blessings of eternity for his posterity. He has seen the future of his children and that of his brothers' children, and understands the longterm futility associated with his attempts to bring Laman and Lemuel back into a state of grace. Yet, he patiently, with love unfeigned, strengthened his rebellious brothers that they might not fear him or the God whom he served.

17.52.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

17.53 Laman and Lemuel had seen the glory of divine presence, had heard the voice of the Lord rebuke them from time to time, but now they "felt" the power of God as they were "shaken" from the crown of their heads to the bottom of their feet. Like Sherem and Korihor, Laman and Lemuel are once again left without excuse.

17.53.30—*shock*—The primary meaning of this word, according to Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary of American English, is to "shake by a sudden collision, meet force with force, strike with horror, offend extremely". Perverse and ignorant men, in an attempt to discredit the word of the Lord as contained in the Book of Mormon, have snidely remarked how impossible it was for Nephi to "electrify" his brothers six hundred years before the birth of Christ. We ought not to be distracted by such hoarse braying.

17.54 Nephi had no desire to hurt his brethren in any way, but as was his

50 And I said unto them: If God had commanded me to do all things I could do them. 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.

51 And now, if the Lord has such great power, and has wrought so many miracles among the children of men, how is it that he cannot instruct me, that I should build a ship?

{¶—1830}

52 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, said many things unto my brethren, insomuch that they were confounded and could not contend against me; neither durst they lay their hands upon *me nor touch me with their fingers, even for the space of many days. Now they durst not do this lest they should wither before me, so powerful was the Spirit of God; and thus it had wrought upon them.

{¶—1830}

53 And it came to pass that the Lord said unto me: Stretch forth thine hand again unto thy brethren, and they shall not wither before thee, but I will shock them, saith the Lord, and this will I do, that they may know that I am the Lord their God.

{¶—1830}

54 And it came to pass that I

1 Ne. 17:50
CR89-A 8
1 Ne. 17:50-51
CR84-A 96
CR90-O 101

* p. 47

want, he followed the Lord's instructions. As to why this little scene played out as it did we can only surmise. That the brothers were then willing to submit to Nephi's guidance is unquestioned. That they were perforce convinced that Nephi was filled with a power beyond their comprehension is also a given. Some scholars have suggested that perhaps Laman and Lemuel, after "many days", had a renewed interest in dispatching their younger brother and that the "shock" they received was to remind them that Nephi could not be trifled with. Be that as it may, the experience was a reaffirmation that what they had "seen" in Nephi's face was a power indescribable; their eyes had not been deceived (see 16.38).

17.55 The confession of Laman and Lemuel after their experience with the power of God in Nephi is redolent of the cowed sentiments of both Sherem and Korihor after they had been the recipients of the "sign" which they had sought from the servants of the Most High. These are not fully repentant sinners. These are sinners who have had their world view completely destroyed, their fragile perceptions of themselves utterly demolished. They have forgotten all and are willing to worship anyone and anything. Nephi is not flattered; he merely reorients his brothers to the teachings of Moses, the significant points of the Law which should be first and foremost in their minds and hearts at this stage of their lives: worship the God of Heaven, not the things that pertain to a fallen world; reverence and obey the founders of their mortal lives, for in so doing they will obtain the promised land which lay waiting for them across the sea.

18.1 The details of building of the ship were progressively revealed, even though Nephi must have had a vision as to how it was to look when completed. He was not blindly led along, but was shown how all of the component parts fit the finished product.

18.1.9—*worship*—We might suppose that the "worship" spoken of here would have been after the manner of the Law of Moses. Undoubtedly sacrifices for sin were offered up and the reconciling parties partook freely of the meal with a desire to do better. We ought not to be too critical of Laman and Lemuel, inasmuch as this degree of religious attention was as difficult for them as it was for the ancient Israelites as they struggled to overcome their weaknesses, follies, and sin.

18.2 Although Nephi knew which kind of tools to make in order to build the craft, yet the manner in which those tools were employed to produce the desired result differed from anything else with which the company had been familiar. Many scholars have suggested that the family of Lehi might have had some prior experience in the shipbuilding business, but even if that were so, it is clear that Nephi's experience was unique.

18.2.3—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

stretched forth my hand unto my brethren, and they did not wither before me; but the Lord did shake them, even according to the word which he had spoken.

55 And now, they said: We know of a surety that the Lord is with thee, for we know that it is the power of the Lord that has shaken us. And they fell down before me, and were about to worship me, but I would not suffer them, saying: I am thy brother, yea, even thy younger brother; wherefore, worship the Lord thy God, and honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God shall give thee.

{Chapter V, continued}
(Chapter 18)

{¶—1830}

1 AND it came to pass that they did worship the Lord, and did go forth with me; and we did work timbers of curious workmanship. And the Lord did show me from time to time after what manner I should work the timbers of the ship.

2 Now I, Nephi, did not work the timbers after the manner which was learned by men, neither did I build the ship after the manner of men; but I did build it after the manner which the Lord had shown unto me; wherefore, it was not after the manner of men.

{¶—1830}

1 Ne. 17:55
MD 364
CR91-A 31
CR99-A 53
CR99-O 6

1 Ne. 18
MD 489
EM 1:141, 142,
145, 213
EM 3:1005
CR90-A 34
CR99-O 6
1 Ne. 18:1–4
AF 5

18.3 The building of the ship was the result of divine intervention, direct revelation which inspired and directed Nephi in all that he did. The prayers of Nephi undoubtedly were part of the process of receiving that revelation, but Nephi seems to indicate here that the private interviews on the mountain went beyond the practical matters of assembling the pieces of the vessel that he and his brothers were fashioning. Many of the prophets of the Lord have testified that once the practical matters of their lives had been addressed, God would then lead them into an awareness of more lofty concerns. Those experiences impinged upon time and eternity, the labors of God the Father in favor of His children, and the destiny of mankind.

18.3.3—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

18.4 Ultimately, the wisdom of God prevails and the revelation that was clearly manifested to Nephi before he began the project, found expression in reality before the eyes of his incredulous brothers. At what point Laman and Lemuel were able to perceive the excellency of the ship they had helped to put together is not included in Nephi’s narrative, but the eventual epiphany must have been stunning. They had been able-bodied men, performing the duty that they owed their brother and their parents, without vision until it appeared before their eyes. As odd as it may seem, however, their dedication to the principles of righteousness did not survive the flush of excitement that had accompanied the completion of the ship.

18.5 Notwithstanding the particular assignment that Nephi had to construct the vessel, Lehi still presided over the entire family. When the general instruction came to laden the craft with their goods and to ensconce themselves on the ship proper, the directions to do so came directly to the father of the family.

18.6 Preparations for the trip into the Indian Ocean had involved more than just the shaping of the craft upon which they were to sail. Other members of the family had spent the intervening time well, gathering and cultivating the foodstuffs which they would need on their voyage, together with the supplies which would help them in their settlement in the promised land. This labor, too, had been the subject of continuous revelation, undoubtedly to Lehi.

18.6.9—*morrow*—There are those who have attempted to temporally lengthen out this word and would have their readers understand that the loading of the ship may have taken a considerable length of time. The word, however, does not admit that interpretation, meaning as it does the “very next day” from the time specified.

18.6.24—*honey*—This may have been the product of the industry of bees, or it may have been syrup made of dates. It is interesting that the Jaredites carried honey bees with them in their travels, calling the insects “deseret”.

18.7 Lehi’s children, at least the older sons, were all of marriageable age when the family departed into the wilderness. We might speculate as to the age of Sariah when all of this transpired, but only to the extent that she was an older woman when her seventh and eighth children of record were born. The younger wives were bearing children, as explicitly stated by Nephi and his brethren.

3 And I, Nephi, did go into the mount oft, and I did pray oft unto the Lord; wherefore the Lord showed unto me great things.

{¶—1830}

4 And it came to pass that after I had finished the ship, according to the word of the Lord, my brethren beheld that it was good, and that the workmanship thereof was exceedingly fine; wherefore, they did humble themselves again before the Lord.

{¶—1830}

5 And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord came unto my father, that we should arise and go down into the ship.

6 And it came to pass that on the morrow, after we had prepared all things, much fruits and meat from the wilderness, and honey in abundance, and provisions according to that which the Lord had commanded us, we did go down into the ship, with all our loading and our seeds, and whatsoever *thing we had brought with us, every one according to his age; wherefore, we did all go down into the ship, with our wives and our children.

{¶—1830}

7 And now, my father had begat two sons in the wilderness; the elder was called Jacob and the younger Joseph.

* p. 48

1 Ne. 18:7
EM 2:828
1 Ne. 18:7,17–19
EM 4:1578

There were at least eight couples who could have reproduced, Lehi and Sariah being the eldest of the company. Some scholars have placed the number aboard ship when they arrived in the promised land from between sixty and eighty souls.

18.7.16—*Jacob*—The first son born to Lehi and Sariah in the wilderness, and the fifth son overall. Of Jacob’s activities with the family of Lehi, we will hear a great deal. He was a devoted student of the scriptures and a masterful teacher. His testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ was, as his father Lehi testified, like unto those who labored with Jesus during his mortal ministry.

18.7.20—*Joseph*—The name of this second son born to Lehi in the wilderness functions as a type. He represents the promise to Lehi that his posterity would not be completely destroyed, notwithstanding the great wickedness that would come in among his children of his sons.

18.8 The manner of propulsion appears to have been by sail, although the narrative does not explicitly say so here. The Jaredites built what they called “barges” to make their way across the ocean, and they were blown across the ocean by mighty winds and waves. The word “sail” is not used in conjunction with the travels of Jared and his associates, while it is with regard to the journey of Lehi and his family (see 18.22–23).

18.9 One wonders at the nature of the merrymaking, followed by dancing and singing. Surely these things, in and of themselves, were not conducive to rudeness or offending the spirit of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that perhaps Laman and Lemuel and others were celebrating extravagantly, perhaps with a liquor or wine that they had concocted at some point in their travels. If they had drunken in excess they would have become intoxicated and ultimately an embarrassment to the entire family.

18.9.24—*Ishmael*—That Lehi and Ishmael were acquainted prior to this time seems certain. It would seem somewhat reasonable to assume also, that the sons of Lehi were acquainted with the children of Ishmael, at least casually.

18.9.48—*rudeness*—The meanings of this English word derived from Latin sources are varied, including “a rough broken state, coarseness of manners, incivility, vulgarity, ignorance, unskillfulness, artlessness, coarseness, violence, impetuosity, storminess”. There is a special kind of irony associated with some of these meanings, given the consequences of the actions of the revelers.

18.10 In what was probably a state of inebriation, Laman and Lemuel lashed out at Nephi’s cool and dispassionate evaluation of their situation. They resorted to those issues that had troubled them from the beginning of their apostasy. They did not wish to be ruled over by anyone, whether their father or one of their younger brothers. They partook of the same spirit that drove Saul to seek the life of David.

18.10.3—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

18.10.45—*soberness*—Speaking with “soberness” may very well have meant

8 And it came to pass after we had all gone down into the ship, and had taken with us our provisions and things which had been commanded us, we did put forth into the sea and were driven forth before the wind towards the promised land.

9 And after we had been driven forth before the wind for the space of many days, behold, my brethren and the sons of Ishmael and also their wives began to make themselves merry, insomuch that they began to dance, and to sing, and to speak with much rudeness, yea, even that they did forget by what power they had been brought thither; yea, they were lifted up unto exceeding rudeness.

10 And I, Nephi, began to fear exceedingly lest the Lord should be angry with us, and smite us because of our iniquity, that we should be swallowed up in the depths of the sea; wherefore, I, Nephi, began to speak to them with much soberness; but behold they were angry with me, saying: We will not that our younger brother shall be a ruler over us.

1 Ne. 18:8–9
CR99-O 6

1 Ne. 18:9
EM 4:1578

1 Ne. 18:10
MD 88
EM 1:141

more than just “solemnity” in this instance. The dictionary assigns several meanings to this word as well, the two most prominent having to do with intoxication. Other meanings are revealing, inasmuch as Webster states that “soberness” also involves being “not mad or insane, not heated with passion, cool dispassionate reason, calm, serious, solemn, grave”.

18.11 This is at least the second time that Laman and Lemuel have treated Nephi with this degree of harshness. The first instance was in the company of Ishmael’s family as they traveled from Jerusalem to the Valley of Lemuel (see 7.16–18). Through the power of the spirit and by the intervention of the Lord, Nephi escaped the bonds in that previous episode. One wonders at what appears to be the shortness of the elder brothers’ memory. What made them think that they could tie Nephi and not have him slip out of his bonds? It may very well be that their reasoning was somewhat impaired by the intensity of their libations. Nephi knew that he could easily extricate himself, but willingly submitted to the will of God that his brothers and their cohorts might be spiritually and temporally educated once again. At the time, however, it must have been a heavy burden to bear as he weltered in the bowels of the ship.

18.11.7—*Laman*—The eldest of Lehi and Sariah’s sons, and one who was particularly hostile toward the righteous members of the family. He constitutes the founder of that segment of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, the Lamanites, who were vehement opponents of the Church of Jesus Christ.

18.11.9—*Lemuel*—The second son of Lehi and Sariah who for the most part was of a similar mind as his older brother Laman. His posterity became generally identified with the Lamanites.

18.11.25—*harshness*—Part of the harshness was manifested in the manner in which the brothers tied up their younger brother. We do not know if Nephi aggravated his circumstances by trying to liberate himself from his bonds manually, but in any case, by the time he was released from bondage, his wrists and ankles were terribly swollen from the constriction of the cords (see 18.15).

18.12 The entire company had learned to their hurt while in the wilderness of the Arabian peninsula that the Liahona worked according to faith, diligence, and heed which they unitedly expressed in God and in His method of directing them. Needless to say, any unity which might have been generated as they had built their ship was torn to tatters as they persecuted Nephi night unto death. One cannot entreat the Lord’s anointed without incurring the wrath of the Father of all.

18.13 As the Liahona had directed the company in the wilderness to avoid danger, locate water and food, and to point out the general direction of their trek toward the promised land, so also did the compass point the ship where it must travel in order to enjoy the best sailing weather. Once the ill treatment of Nephi began, together with the verbal and emotional abuse of those who sided with Nephi, the company was allowed to drift into tumultuous waters and, like in the wilderness, began to be subject to the capriciousness of the elements.

18.14 It is clear that those who were opposing Nephi were completely aware

{*¶*—1830}

11 And it came to pass that Laman and Lemuel did take me and bind me with cords, and they did treat me with much harshness; nevertheless, the Lord did suffer it that he might show forth his power, unto the fulfilling of his word which he had spoken concerning the wicked.

1 Ne. 18:11
EM 2:801

{*¶*—1830}

12 And it came to pass that after they had bound me insomuch that I could not move, the compass, which had been prepared of the Lord, did cease to work.

1 Ne. 18:12
AF 5
PM 402
EM 2:829
1 Ne. 18:13–21
CR00-A 91

13 Wherefore, they knew not whither they should steer the ship, insomuch that there arose a great storm, yea, a great and terrible tempest, and we were driven back upon the waters for the space of three days; and they began to be frightened exceedingly lest they should be drowned in the sea; nevertheless they did not loose me.

14 And on the fourth day, which

of their evil doing, but could not bring themselves to release the young man. The evidence against the elder brothers was mounting with each wind-driven wave. For all of their fear of death, their fear of losing face, being driven to humility, admitting to having abused an innocent man was more than they could bear. On the fourth day, however, they were driven to extremity.

18.15 Thinking of the consequences of sin as mere coincidence will only take the sinner so far before the realization sets in that there is a connection between ill-conduct and the sufferings that devolve upon the wicked. In the case of Laman, Lemuel, and their party, the reality distilled upon them in approximately four days. But what may we say of the righteous aboard ship? The events of those four days passed with equal intensity, insofar as the rising tempest and their peril at sea was concerned. Nephi's parents, his wife, his children, his righteous siblings all had to bear the outward consequences of Laman and Lemuel's recalcitrance. They suffered in the midst of tempest the physical ailments which might be expected in a ship of that size. Lehi had received wonderful promises from the Lord regarding himself and his posterity. Nephi had similar visions and revelations which indicated that they would eventually live through the torment associated with the rebellion of a portion of their company. That must have been the one bright hope which sustained them throughout their ordeal. Yet in the hour of tribulation, the wickedness of the world seems somewhat grim and unrelenting.

18.16 Nephi's steadfastness came as a result of his faith in his God. He was incapacitated and imprisoned and in that motionless state was debilitated considerably. Once he was released by Laman and Lemuel, it was some time before he was fully recovered. His physical condition would have been a constant reminder to them of their perfidy.

18.17 What follows in this paragraph is a review of those events that transpired while Nephi was held captive in the hold of the ship and not episodes that took place after his release. In the past, Lehi had been able to speak to his sons with such fervency and power that they would tremble before him (see 2.14). The two brothers, however, in the intervening years, had hardened their hearts and their minds to such a degree that there was little of a spiritual nature that would compel them to change their course of action. They were, in a very real way, past feeling. Lehi and Sariah succumbed to the physical effects of the tempest and were confined to their quarters. Their spiritual grief, however, was far greater.

18.17.4—*Lehi*—The first prophet of the Lamanites and the Nephites who left the land of Jerusalem about the year 600 BC. Many of his experiences are recorded in the writings of his son, Nephi, engraved upon the Small Plates of Nephi.

18.17.17—*Ishmael*—That Lehi and Ishmael were acquainted prior to this time seems certain. It would seem somewhat reasonable to assume also, that the sons of Lehi were acquainted with the children of Ishmael, at least casually.

18.17.37–39—*stricken in years*—We may only guess at the age of Lehi and Sariah at this time. Whatever their circumstances, Sariah had given birth to two children during their eight-year sojourn in the wilderness (see 18.7). Their outward appearance did include graying hair. Certainly their arduous experiences since leaving Jerusalem, together with

we had been driven back, the tempest began to be exceedingly sore.

{*¶*—1830}

15 And it came to pass that we were about to be swallowed up in the depths of the sea. And after we had been driven back upon the waters for the space of four days, my brethren began to see that the judgments of God were upon them, and that they must perish save that they should repent of their iniquities; wherefore, they came unto me, and loosed the bands *which were upon my wrists, and behold they had swollen exceedingly; and also mine ankles were much swollen, and great was the soreness thereof.

* p. 49

16 Nevertheless, I did look unto my God, and I did praise him all the day long; and I did not murmur against the Lord because of mine afflictions.

1 Ne. 18:16
CR89-A 29

{*¶*—1830}

17 Now my father, Lehi, had said many things unto them, and also unto the sons of Ishmael; but, behold, they did breathe out much threatenings against anyone that should speak for me; and my parents being stricken in years, and having suffered much grief because of their children, they were brought down, yea, even upon their sickbeds.

1 Ne. 18:17
MD 341
1 Ne. 18:17–18
EM 2:828

the rough treatment of their children, had taken a toll on the aging patriarch and his eternal companion.

18.18 Even the threat of the demise of their parents would not bring Laman and Lemuel to relent of their persecution against Nephi. The brothers had plotted against the life of their father before (see 16.37) so that the prospect of Lehi passing away from “natural” causes did not seem to affect them much. Had Lehi and Sariah died, of course, their bodies would have been committed to the depths of the sea.

18.18.42–45—*low in the dust*—One might be tempted to have a little fun with the language here. Nephi’s metaphor regarding death and burial while at sea seems out of place, somewhat misconstrued given the narrative context. How can one’s grey hairs lie low in the dust if one dies at sea? There is no “dust”. Nephi, who was then writing his account high in the mountains of the land of Nephi, must have realized the same himself and added his more appropriate metaphor as an aesthetic clarification. The question remains, however, as to why Nephi did not “erase” the inappropriate phrase from his text as he was composing. When we remember the media upon which Nephi is recording his account, the answer is simple. The Small Plates of Nephi were comprised of a gold alloy, relatively thin plates at that. One might scribe characters on a fresh plate and then, if necessary, “smooth out” any errors made during transcription. But what if one were writing on the back side of a plate which had been filled on the front? “Smoothing out” any errors might possibly damage the previous writing. What would one do? The most efficient method would be to simply add clarification in the narrative that would point the reader to what the writer really had in mind without physically changing the writing on the plate itself. This is a technique that we will see repeated time and again in the text of the Book of Mormon. When Joseph Smith made his translation of the record of the Nephites, he did so accurately, preserving these interesting little hiccups in the original author’s writing.

18.19 Jacob at the time could have been no more than nine years of age at the most. Joseph would have been a year or two younger. Even in Jewish society, these boys would still have been considered children. If our understanding of Jewish tradition be correct, a young man did not come of age until he had reached his thirteenth birthday. Jacob and Joseph were deeply troubled by the illness of their mother. But the concerns of Laman and Lemuel’s youngest siblings or the appeals of their nephews and nieces would not move the bullies to relent in their treatment of Nephi. One would think that Nephi’s wife, the sister of Ishmael’s sons and the wives of Laman and Lemuel would have some influence with these wicked men, but to no avail.

18.19.1—*Jacob*—Of Jacob’s activities with the family of Lehi, we will hear a great deal. He was a devoted student of the scriptures and a masterful teacher. His testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ was, as his father Lehi testified, like unto those who labored with Jesus during his mortal ministry.

18.19.3—*Joseph*—The name of this second son born to Lehi in the wilderness functions as a type. He represents the promise to Lehi that his posterity would not be completely destroyed, notwithstanding the great wickedness that would come in among his children of his sons.

18.20 Not until Laman and Lemuel accepted the fact that they were all going

18 Because of their grief and much sorrow, and the iniquity of my brethren, they were brought near even to be carried out of this time to meet their God; yea, their grey hairs were about to be brought down to lie low in the dust; yea, even they were near to be cast with sorrow into a watery grave.

19 And Jacob and Joseph also, being young, having need of much nourishment, were grieved because of the afflictions of their mother; and also my wife with her tears and prayers, and also my children, did not soften the hearts of my brethren that they would loose me.

1 Ne. 18:19
EM 2:713
EM 4:1579

20 And there was nothing save it

to die unless they released Nephi from his bonds did the two brothers do what was needful (see 18.15). Nephi is always the optimist, referring to the apparent change in his brothers' attitude as a "softening of the heart" and his release from bondage as an act of "repentance". These were hardened criminals who were compelled by fear to do the "right" thing. Had the Lord not allowed the ship to become entangled in the tempest, Nephi might very well have died in the hold unmourned by his elder brothers.

18.21 Ignorant and faithless men have made mock of the "compass" spoken of in the Book of Mormon, or the Liahona as it is later called. These detractors point to the historical fact that the "magnetic compass" was not invented until the 12th century AD. Therefore, they surmise, Lehi could not possibly have had access to a "compass" 600 years before the birth of Christ. In no place, however, do we find a description as to precisely how the Liahona operated, save that it was deeply influenced by the faith, diligence, and heed of those who possessed it. This, of course, is not "magnetism" in any event. The problem we are faced with is the usage of the word "compass" in modern parlance as opposed to that in the early nineteenth century when the Book of Mormon was translated into English. Today, the word "compass" is almost invariably used in reference to the device by which one is oriented to the magnetic poles of the earth. Students of the scriptures are often surprised to discover other uses of the term in the sacred texts. What precisely does it mean to "fetch a compass"? It certainly does not mean to find the instrument in question for one's associate. Obsolete usages include "compass" as a description of a ring, globe, or any other object of a circular outline. In other settings, "compass" merely means "curved". Additionally, it should be observed that the term "compass" might just as well have been applied to the Liahona because of the appearance and movement of the two "spindles" which operated within the sphere. In the end, however, what better term could have been employed to describe the practical function of the Liahona, regardless of whether or not it worked on magnetic principles?

18.21.15—*compass*—It might be noted in passing that in almost all dictionaries, whether present day compositions or those written two hundred years ago, the "magnetic compass" meaning is not listed as one of the "primary" meanings of the word.

18.22 With the use of the Liahona, Nephi was able to avoid the dangers and other obstacles that would have hindered the company in their voyage to the land of their inheritance.

18.22.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

18.23 If we assume that Nephi's navigation took him south into the Indian Ocean, we might also suspect that he was guided deep into the southern hemisphere that he might sail south of Australia and New Zealand and then eastward to the western shores of South America, landing somewhere near northern Chile. These suppositions being the case, it would have taken "many days" indeed to traverse that vast tract of open sea.

were the power of God, which threatened them with destruction, could soften their hearts; wherefore, when they saw that they were about to be swallowed up in the depths of the sea they repented of the thing which they had done, insomuch that they loosed me.

{*¶*—1830}

21 And it came to pass after they had loosed me, behold, I took the compass, and it did work whither I desired it. And it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord; and after I had prayed the winds did cease, and the storm did cease, and there was a great calm.

1 Ne. 18:21
AF 5
1 Ne. 18:21–23
CR97-A 101

{*¶*—1830}

22 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did guide the ship, that we sailed again towards the promised land.

23 And it came to pass that after we had sailed for the space of many days we did arrive at the promised land; and we went forth upon the land, and did pitch our tents; and we did call it the promised land.

18.23.42–43—*promised land*—As opposed to the land Bountiful which, though desirable, was not the land of their inheritance. Laman and Lemuel were no doubt relieved that they would not have to “fetch another compass” to anywhere.

18.24 Although the portion of land which the little company first settled was part of the promised land, many of the pioneers were not aware of the size of the continents which they had inherited from the Lord God of Israel through the covenant made with Lehi and Nephi. Notwithstanding the length of the voyage, their seed corn survived. The colonists planted all that they had with them in order to reap the promised harvest. Some of the seed must have been nearly ten years old when they planted it, yet given the richness of the soil and the blessings of God upon their labors, the harvests proved to beyond their greatest desires.

18.24.38—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

18.25 The beasts that Lehi’s company encountered appear to be native to the Americas, but undoubtedly many had originally been brought to the western hemisphere by the Jaredites in their eight divinely inspired ships. With the destruction of the Jaredites, in a battle that had raged in the far northern reaches of the land of promise, many of the domesticated animals inadvertently left behind began to populate the land. Lehi and his family became the beneficiaries. One is confronted with what appears to some to be a nomenclature problem. Are the names of the animals referred to here precisely those which describe the animals themselves, or are they words which Nephi chose to describe the myriad of species which he had never seen before? How would one describe a llama, an alpaca, a tapir, a vicuna, a huanacu, or any of the other new species to someone who had never seen such beasts? Would it not be in terms with which one is most familiar? Nephi had the challenge of expressing what he observed for his distant readers. Joseph Smith had an equally difficult task, even if he had seen these animals in vision before working the translation. It is interesting to note that in at least one case where unidentifiable animals are mentioned, that exotic names were provided (see *ET-C 9.19*)

18.25.42—*horse*—Many anti-Mormons have ridiculed the notion that the Nephites found horses in the Western Hemisphere, believing that the horse was not introduced into the Americas until the coming of the Europeans. Apologists have suggested that the nomenclature used by Nephi reflected general classes of animals based on appearance or function rather than popular or scientific terminology. Be that as it may, there will yet come a time when the truth of the matter will prove to be that there were “horses” among the Jaredites and among the posterity of Lehi not much different than those which now graze in pastures from Canada to Argentina.

18.25.70—*ore*—The amount of gold, silver, and copper found by the ancient inhabitants of the Americas is legendary in its scope.

{*9—1830*}

24 And it came to pass that we did begin to till the earth, and we began to plant seeds; yea, we did put all our seeds into the earth, which we had brought from the land of Jerusalem. And it came to pass that they did grow exceedingly; wherefore, we were blessed in abundance.

{*9—1830*}

25 And it came to pass that we did find upon the land of promise, as we journeyed in the wilderness, that there were beasts in the forests of every kind, both the cow and the ox, and the *ass and the horse, and the goat and the wild goat, and all manner of wild animals, which were for the use of men. And we did find all manner of ore, both of gold, and of silver, and of copper.

* p. 50

{Chapter V, continued}
(Chapter 19)

{¶—1830}

19.1 For more than ten years, Nephi and his father had been keeping their records on perishable materials, probably papyri or parchment. With such media, the revelations of these great prophets would have unavoidably been lost to their posterity and to humanity. The Lord therefore called upon Nephi to preserve the writings of his father and Nephi's own interactions with deity upon metal plates. These voluminous plates would ultimately be called the Large Plates of Nephi and would suffice the needs of the company for nearly 20 years. Mormon, as he was compiling his own account of the Nephite civilization, initially drew upon these Large Plates of Nephi in order to compose his narrative. That summary record within the Book of Mormon was called the Book of Lehi. As the translation of the Book of Mormon progressed, there was an incident in which the manuscript containing the Book of Lehi was lost. Joseph Smith was commanded not to retranslate the Book of Lehi but to translate the record found in the Small Plates of Nephi, which Plates Mormon had appended to his own collection.

19.2 Thirty years after the departure of Lehi and his family from Jerusalem, Nephi would be commanded to make another set of plates, these to be of a different tenor, far more spiritually oriented, dedicated primarily to the teachings and revelations which Nephi and his father had delivered to the family (see *2NE-C 5.28–31*). These would eventually be called the Small Plates of Nephi, the account from which we are presently reading. In making this second set of plates Nephi was quite discriminating and thought it unnecessary to recount many wonderful and important things which he had preserved on the Large Plates. Thus Lehi's record is quite truncated, as is Nephi's accounting of the family's eight years in the wilderness of Arabia. This is not to discredit in any fashion the material preserved on the Large Plates of Nephi, for they do contain the words and activities of Lehi and Nephi in greater detail, material that cannot be disparaged because of its quality of content. As he progressed for those twenty years, there can be no question that Nephi was attempting to fulfill the commandments of God by preserving his history. No doubt it was adequate and edifying.

19.2.11—*them*—That is to say, the Large Plates of Nephi.

19.2.22–23—*these plates*—That is to say, the Small Plates of Nephi.

19.3 Nephi's redaction of his own record is a blessing to all who read it. It is filled with faith, truth, and light, a tribute to faithful men who lived 2,600 years ago, who kept the commandments of God and advanced the cause of Christ among their posterity for many generations. They are worthy examples for those of us in this day who struggle from day to day in the midst of our own personal wildernesses.

19.3.6–7—*these plates*—That is to say, the first plates which Nephi made, the Large Plates, the antecedent of the demonstrative pronoun being the phrase "first plates" of the previous verse.

19.3.13—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

1 AND it came to pass that the Lord commanded me, wherefore I did make plates of ore that I might engraven upon them the record of my people. And upon the plates which I made I did engraven the record of my father, and also our journeyings in the wilderness, and the prophecies of my father; and also many of mine own prophecies have I engraven upon them.

1 Ne. 19
MD 489
EM 1:146
EM 2:748
1 Ne. 19:1
EM 1:199
EM 2:827
1 Ne. 19:1–5
AF 263
1 Ne. 19:1–6
MD 326

2 And I knew not at the time when I made them that I should be commanded of the Lord to make these plates; wherefore, the record of my father, and the genealogy of his fathers, and the more part of all our proceedings in the wilderness are engraven upon those first plates of which I have spoken; wherefore, the things which transpired before I made these plates are, of a truth, more particularly made mention upon the first plates.

1 Ne. 19:2
EM 1:199

{¶—1830}

3 And after I had made these plates by way of commandment, I, Nephi, received a commandment that the ministry and the prophecies, the more plain and precious parts of them, should be written upon these plates; and that the things which were written should be kept for the instruction of my people, who should possess the land, and also for other wise purposes, which purposes are known unto the Lord.

19.3.35–36—*these plates*—That is to say, the Small Plates upon which he has been recounting the narrative of this book from which we are presently reading.

19.3.61–63—*other wise purposes*—It is felicitous indeed that the second record was made, preserved for generations, physically attached to Mormon’s set of plates, and eventually translated as a substitute for the lost Book of Lehi. That there are other wise motives for the production of the Small Plates of Nephi we have no reason to doubt.

19.4 Once Nephi and those who would follow him departed from the land of their first inheritance into the mountains of the land of Nephi, the animosity between the Nephites and the Lamanites increased exponentially. Much of this recorded antipathy is absent from the account given to us in the Small Plates of Nephi

19.4.3—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

19.4.10–11—*other plates*—The Large Plates of Nephi.

19.4.51–52—*these plates*—Although one could argue either way (see 19.3.6–7), in the context of the narrative, this instance of “these plates” appears to be in reference to the Small Plates, those that would be handed down from one prophet to another. One must still ask the question, however, as to the spiritual nature of the man or men unto whom were entrusted the Large Plates of Nephi.

19.5 The historical context for the making of the Small Plates of Nephi is recounted in the fifth chapter of Second Nephi. The synopsis of Lehi and Nephi’s records from 600 BC until 570 BC are contained in First Nephi and the first five chapters of Second Nephi. Thereafter Nephi restricts himself almost exclusively to the teachings of his brother Jacob, the writings of Isaiah, and his own revelations.

19.6 Every man on this planet is on a learning curve of some kind. Nephi was no exception. He was a brilliant and experienced man. Even at the height of his physical and spiritual powers, the Lord suggested to him that he could do better, that his writings could be far more beneficial to the Kingdom of God if he worked at it a little. The commandment to make the Small Plates undoubtedly peaked Nephi a little, but he was a man full of love, devoted to God the Eternal Father and His Son Jesus Christ. He determined to do better.

19.6.8—*plates*—Whether they be the Large Plates or the Small Plates of Nephi it was the same to Nephi in his efforts to preserve the history of the people of God. It would appear that Nephi is sensitive here about his production of the Large Plates. The Lord’s request to have a second set made that was more spiritual than the first must have troubled him a little. He may have thought that he had been doing fairly well during those twenty years he was writing in the Large Plates.

19.7 Our affections are determined in part by our investments of time, means, and energy. Nephi loved the Lord God of Israel because of his continuing willingness to do as He instructed. His relationship with the Father and the Son was far more substantive and complex than could possibly be understood

4 Wherefore, I, Nephi, did make a record upon the other plates, which gives an account, or which gives a greater account of the wars and contentions and destructions of my people. And this have I done, and commanded my people what they should do after I was gone; and that these plates should be handed down from one generation to another, or from one prophet to another, until further commandments of the Lord.

5 And an account of my making these plates shall be given hereafter; and then, behold, I proceed according to that which I have spoken; and this I do that the more sacred things may be kept for the knowledge of my people.

6 Nevertheless, I do not write anything upon plates save it be that I think it be sacred. And now, if I do err, even did they err of old; not that I would excuse myself because of other men, but because of the weakness which is in me, according to the flesh, I would excuse myself.

7 For the things which some men esteem to be of great worth, both to the body and soul, others set at naught and trample under their

1 Ne. 19:5–6
CR86-A 75

1 Ne. 19:7
DNTC 2:308
JC 13
PM 525

by Laman and Lemuel in their state of spiritual degeneracy. By doing those things that God would have us do, we find that we have approached Him in more than our worship. We find that we are more like Him in our attitudes and desires for truth, light, and life. We begin to acquire His perfections in their rudimentary state and we rejoice when those embryonic qualities grow within us. Those who have not planted the seeds of righteousness in their own hearts know nothing of that which has and is transpiring in the hearts of those seeking to please God.

19.7.34—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

19.8 Some scholars have gone so far as to suggest that Lehi left Jerusalem for the last time on the date upon which Jesus would be born exactly six hundred years later. That, perhaps, is an unnecessary conceit. The first mention of this timetable takes place in conjunction with Lehi's teaching of his family after he had completed his account of the Vision of the Tree of Life (see 10.2–4). Although Lehi had been taught by an angelic being in his vision, there is nothing in the narrative suggesting that the six hundred year revelation had come to Lehi in the same fashion. Nephi makes a clear distinction between those things which his father experienced in the Vision of the Tree of Life and those things which he had learned through the power and influence of the spirit of God (see 10.17). In Nephi's account of his interview with the angel and the Vision, he testifies of the birth of Christ, but nothing is mentioned of a precise timeframe in which those things would transpire. The question remains then, what was the setting in which an angel revealed to Lehi or Nephi that item of information. One might also wonder whether that exact period of time had been revealed to one of the prophets whose record was inscribed upon the Plates of Brass. In that case, Nephi might be referring to an angelic revelation which would have been included in that sacred record.

19.8.22—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

19.9 The temporal sufferings of Jesus Christ during his mortal ministry were, in part, simply a matter of having lived upon a fallen world, associating with men and women who had partaken of the spirit of a telestial world. It is not of this common lot of mankind that Nephi is speaking. It is the peculiar viciousness directed at the Savior because he was recognized as the Son of God. The abuses of the last few hours of his life reflected the loathing of that fallen angel, Lucifer of old, whose rebellion against the authority of God separated him forever from the bastions of light and truth. Every vile and unseemly thing which Satan could inspire men to do was perpetrated upon Jesus in an attempt to distract him from the office which he was performing for the souls of the children of God on the earth. Jesus, however, was not to be intimidated or deterred from that which he had been sent to earth to accomplish. The “loving kindness” and “long-suffering” of the Christ manifested itself in his suffering for sin. No personal considerations were entertained during those hours as he paid the price for the individual sins of mankind.

feet. Yea, even the very *God of Israel do men trample under their feet; I say, trample under their feet but I would speak in other words—they set him at naught, and hearken not to the voice of his counsels.

8 And behold he cometh, according to the words of the angel, in six hundred years from the time my father left Jerusalem.

9 And the world, because of their iniquity, shall judge him to be a thing of naught; wherefore they scourge him, and he suffereth it; and they smite him, and he suffereth it. Yea, they spit upon him, and he suffereth it, because of his loving kindness and his long-suffering towards the children of men.

EM 3:1392
*p. 51
1 Ne. 19:7–8
MD 490
EM 3:1165
1 Ne. 19:7–9
PM 494
1 Ne. 19:7–13
MD 490
1 Ne. 19:7–14
PM 165
1 Ne. 19:7–15
CR93-A 34
1 Ne. 19:7–17
MD 322
DNTC 2:354
1 Ne. 19:8
JC 103
PM 457
MLM 27
EM 1:169, 170
EM 2:727, 731

1 Ne. 19:9
PM 498
EM 2:894
CR84-A 27
CR87-O 102
CR89-A 79
CR95-O 17
1 Ne. 19:9–10,
13–15
CR93-A 34

The irony of this entire scene is the fact that as Jesus was suffering for the iniquity of men, Satan was taking advantage of the weaknesses caused by those very sins to whip the wicked into a frenzy yearning for fratricide.

19.10 To know the truth from God is a wonderful thing. It nourishes the soul, delights the mind and heart of those who peruse it implications. To have before us the testimonies of ancient Apostles and prophets constitutes a treasure immeasurable. The Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price only adds to our enjoyment. The promise that there are yet many other servants of God whose records have been preserved and will one day be directly available should thrill the heart of every righteous man who has ever felt the power of the spirit of the Lord. The expectation that we will one day take the hand of these great messengers of the Kingdom in fellowship is an expectation almost inexpressible.

19.10.3–6—*God of our fathers*—Can there be a clearer identification made between Jehovah and the Lord Jesus Christ?

19.10.12—*Egypt*—A land naturally watered by the Nile River, the delta region of the same being luxuriant as one could hope for in terms of animal and vegetable life.

19.10.29—*Abraham*—The undisputed “Father of the Faithful”. Modern biblical scholars are generally kind to Abraham as are most theologians in the sister religious of Judaism. The spiritual stature of Abraham is, for the most part, immeasurable by man. Abraham is one of the Lord God’s noblemen, whose faith and confidence in the divine word are equaled or excelled by few who have come into mortality upon this earth. Removing the Lord Jesus Christ from the list of candidates, however, would probably render our estimation of Abraham all but absolute. Abraham was one of three sons born to Terah during a millennium of poverty and famine. Through Abraham’s ministrations the promises made to the ancient fathers were preserved and re-established in earnest. In one of the most tender of moments recorded in secular or ecclesiastical history, the Lord God of Heaven instructed Abraham in the nature of the greatest gift that a loving God may bestow upon his creation when he asked for the sacrificed life of his son Isaac.

19.10.32—*Isaac*—The only son of the union between Abraham and Sarah. There was some strife between Isaac and Ishmael, the son of Hagar, as there had been between Sarah and her handmaiden who had been elevated to the role of wife to Abraham as the result of Sarah’s barrenness. Because Sarah was the first wife, the wife of the covenant, her son Isaac took precedence over the elder half-brother. The animosity engendered during those early years has not completely abated, even into modern times. Isaac was an active participant in the “sacrifice” required by God of his father Abraham.

19.10.37—*Jacob*—The younger of the twin sons born to Isaac and Rebecca. The elder son, Esau, despised his spiritual inheritance by marrying outside of the perpetual covenant established between God and his grandfather Abraham. The lot fell to the faithful Jacob who was then forced to flee for his life. Jacob’s name was changed to Israel, and with his four wives founded the House of Israel, that covenant family by whom the entire population of the earth was to be instructed and redeemed.

19.10.46—*angel*—Again, we are not certain to whom the angel delivered the message, whether to Lehi or Nephi. It may very well be that the entire passage from verse 8 to verse 10 are to be understood as having

10 And the God of our fathers, who were led out of Egypt, out of bondage, and also were preserved in the wilderness by him, yea, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, yieldeth himself, according to the words of the angel, as a man, into the hands of wicked men, to be lifted up, according to the words of Zenock, and to be crucified, according to the words of Neum, and to be buried in a sepulchre, according to the words of Zenos, which he spake concerning the three days of darkness, which should be a sign given of his death unto those who should inhabit the isles of the sea, more especially given unto those who are of the house of Israel.

1 Ne. 19:10
AF 512
AGQ 1:17
AGQ 3:44, 139
MD 103, 607
DNTC 1:631, 828
DS 1:27
JC 51
PM 164, 525, 528, 546
EM 1:145, 305
EM 2:720, 731, 733, 749
EM 3:1006, 1166
EM 4:1623, 1624
CR99-O 90
1 Ne. 19:10–12
MM 4:225
EM 2:727
1 Ne. 19:10–13
MD 172, 174, 490
EM 2:732
1 Ne. 19:10–14
PM 539
1 Ne. 19:10–16
MD 454
1 Ne. 19:10–17
EM 4:1623
1 Ne. 19:10–21
EM 3:1161

been revealed by this angel.

- 19.10.65—*Zenock*—A prophet of the Lord God of Israel whose prophecies were engraved upon the Brass plates. He was undoubtedly of the loins of Joseph, either through Ephraim or Manasseh because Mormon testifies that he was one of the grand progenitors of their race (see *3 NE-C 10.15–17*). Zenock will be cited by Alma and Amulek in order to help the poverty-stricken Zoramites in the land of Antionum to believe in the coming of the Son of God to redeem mankind (see *AL-C 33.15–16* and *AL-C 34.7*). Nephi, the son of Helaman, would also resort to the writings of Zenock to prove to the people of Zarahemla that the coming of a Savior was a prophecy testified to by a host of holy men (see *HE-C 8.20*). Here Nephi refers to the prophecy made by Zenock that Christ would be lifted up, or crucified.
- 19.10.75—*Neum*—As far as can be seen, this is the only citation attributed to the Israelite prophet Neum. Some scholars have suggested that the can also be spelled as Nehum, Nechem, Nahum, or even Nehemiah in its full form. Although the temptation is great to do so, we may not say with certainty that Neum and the minor prophet Nahum are the same person. There is nothing in the current version that we have of Nahum’s writings which would reflect the fact that the Messiah was to be crucified. This could, however, be the result of elisions made by the Jews in the purge of Christian themes from their scriptures, during the first century following the death of Jesus (see 13.21–34).
- 19.10.88—*Zenos*—Another Israelite prophet who, like Zenock, was a scion of Joseph, he who was sold into Egypt, and one of the direct ancestors of the family of Lehi (see *3 NE-C 10.16*). The prophecy of Zenos begins with Nephi’s testimony that the prophet knew of the burial of the Savior and continues through verse 17. Jacob, the brother of Nephi quotes the entire Allegory of Zenos in his writings in order to explain how a people who once having rejected the Son of God could ever be established again as a covenant people (see *JA-C 4.15–18* and *JA-C 5–6*). Alma cites Zenos in order to demonstrate to the Zoramites that they did not need a synagogue in order to worship God (see *AL-C 33.2–11*). He also uses that same prophet to inspire them to believe in the coming of the Son of God (see *AL-C 33.12–15*). Amulek refers to Zenos as well (see *AL-C 34.7*) in conjunction with the atonement of Jesus Christ. Nephi testifies of the martyrdom of Zenos (see *HE-C 8.19*). Samuel bears witness that Zenos prophesied that there would come a time when the Lamanites would come to a knowledge of the truth, no doubt in conjunction with the Allegory of Zenos recorded by Jacob in his testimony of the same effect.
- 19.10.113–116—*isles of the sea*—The specific signs given by Zenos were to serve as harbingers for those of the House of Israel who dwelt in places where one would be required to take passage aboard a ship of some sort or another. Nephi and his posterity knew that their dwelling in the Americas qualified them as referents (see *2 NE-C 10.20–22*).
- 19.10.128—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

19.11 The prophet Zenos was particularly gifted in articulating that which he had seen in vision. The joys and sufferings of the Nephites at the time of the death of Jesus Christ are clearly prophesied here. They enjoyed the company

11 For thus spake the prophet:
The Lord God surely shall visit all
the house of Israel at that day,

1 Ne. 19:11–17
EM 4:1624

of the Savior, heard his voice and beheld his face, but they also passed through a series of terrifying destructions before his appearance among them.

- 19.11.5—*prophet*—The Israelite prophet Zenos from whose record on the Brass Plates Nephi is quoting (see 19.10.88).
- 19.11.16—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 19.11.18.19—*that day*—The antecedent for “that” is to be found in the previous verse; that is, the day or period of time associated with the three days of darkness, the mortal death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 19.11.23—*voice*—The voice of Christ came to the Nephites in their great terror after the three days of darkness on two separate occasions (see 3 *NE-C 9–10*). Then the Savior descended from heaven and administered to them for several days (see 3 *NE-C 11–28*).
- 19.11.38—*thunderings*—As testified to in Nephi’s record (3 *NE-C 8.6, 12, 17, 19*). The thunder was so intense that the Nephites felt that the earth was going to break apart.
- 19.11.41—*lightnings*—As testified to in Nephi’s record (3 *NE-C 8.7, 12, 17, 19*). Never had there been a display of lightning of such intensity in the history of the Nephites.
- 19.11.46—*tempest*—As testified to in Nephi’s record (3 *NE-C 8.6, 12, 17, 19*). The earth was in part deformed because of the tempest.
- 19.11.48—*fire*—The city of Zarahemla was burned (see 3 *NE-C 8.8*), as were the cities of Jacobugath, Laman, Josh, and Kishkumen (see 3 *NE-C 9.10–11*).
- 19.11.50—*smoke*—As testified to in Nephi’s record (3 *NE-C 10.13*). Nephi makes a distinction between the “smoke” and the “vapor of darkness”. In other words “smoke” and “darkness” are not the same to him.
- 19.11.52–54—*vapor of darkness*—As testified to in Nephi’s record (3 *NE-C 8.19–23*).
- 19.11.58–61—*opening of the earth*—The cities of Moronihah and Gilgal were thus destroyed (see 3 *NE-C 9.5–6*), as well as the cities of Gadiandi, Gadiomnah, Jacob, and Gimgimno (see 3 *NE-C 9.8*). Many cities were also drowned in the depths of the sea (see 3 *NE-C 8.9* and 3 *NE-C 9.7*).
- 19.11.64—*mountains*—The city of Moronihah was destroyed in this manner (see 3 *NE-C 8.10*).

19.12 Zenos not only saw the temporal trials and tribulations which would come upon the children of Israel at the time of the death of Christ, he also noted that most of them would be suffering a degree of apostasy, their kings referring to the “god of nature” rather than the “god of heaven” This view is completely consistent with the Allegory of Zenos wherein the attempts of the master of the vineyard to have his scattered trees bring forth good fruit generally failed. Apostasy is the natural resting state of humanity (see *JA-C 5*).

- 19.12.10—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.
- 19.12.11—*Zenos*—Another Israelite prophet who, like Zenock, was a scion of Joseph, he who was sold into Egypt, and one of the direct

some with his voice, because of their righteousness, unto their great joy and salvation, and others with the thunderings and the lightnings of his power, by tempest, by fire, and by smoke, and vapor of darkness, and by the opening of the earth, and by mountains which shall be carried up.

12 And all these things must surely come, saith the prophet Zenos. And the rocks of the earth must rend; and because of the groanings of the earth, many of the kings of the isles of the sea shall be wrought upon by the Spirit of God, to exclaim: The God of nature suffers.

1 Ne. 19:12
MA 152
AF 512
AGQ 4:139
MD 323
DNTC 1:831
1 Ne. 19:12–14
AF 320

ancestors of the family of Lehi (see *3 NE-C 10.16*). The prophecy of Zenos begins with Nephi's testimony that the prophet knew of the burial of the Savior and continues through verse 17. Jacob, the brother of Nephi quotes the entire Allegory of Zenos in his writings in order to explain how a people who once having rejected the Son of God could ever be established again as a covenant people (see *JA-C 4.15–18* and *JA-C 5–6*). Alma cites Zenos in order to demonstrate to the Zoramites that they did not need a synagogue in order to worship God (see *AL-C 33.2–11*). He also uses that same prophet to inspire them to believe in the coming of the Son of God (see *AL-C 33.12–15*). Amulek refers to Zenos as well (see *AL-C 34.7*) in conjunction with the atonement of Jesus Christ. Nephi testifies of the martyrdom of Zenos (see *HE-C 8.19*). Samuel bears witness that Zenos prophesied that there would come a time when the Lamanites would come to a knowledge of the truth, no doubt in conjunction with the Allegory of Zenos recorded by Jacob in his testimony of the same effect.

19.12.18—*rend*—As testified to in Nephi's record (*3 NE-C 8.13, 17, 18* and *3 NE-C 10.9*).

19.12.15—*groanings*—As testified to in Nephi's record (*3 NE-C 10.9*). The great predeluvian prophet, Enoch, was also privy to the groanings of the earth at the time of the death of Jesus Christ

19.13 At this point in his prophecy, Zenos turns to the fate of the Jews in Jerusalem at the time of the Savior's death. Within a hundred years after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the city of Jerusalem would be utterly destroyed and the nation or kingdom of the Jews will have ceased to exist. They had eyes to see, but chose not to perceive the power of God that was manifested among them by the mortal Messiah. They had ears to hear, but chose to ignore those teachings which would have brought them happiness and peace. They had hearts that were capable of receiving the truth, but they chose to harden themselves until they were past feeling.

19.13.8—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, "flowing peace" or "established in peace". The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, "established in peace" is by definition, the City of the great King.

19.13.11—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

19.13.25—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

19.14 The entire generation that rejected Jesus as the Christ was reduced to penury almost in an instant. We do not have a complete accounting of the scattering of the Jews during the first century after Christ's birth, but if the truth were known, we would discover that no matter where they went, no matter how far and undiscovered a country they may have resorted to try to find solace, their nefarious deeds followed them and drove them into the dust with sorrow and great remorse. The sufferings of their posterity during the last

13 And as for those who are at Jerusalem, saith the prophet, they shall be scourged by all people, because they crucify the God of Israel, and turn their hearts aside, rejecting signs and wonders, and the power and glory of the God of Israel.

14 And because they turn their hearts aside, saith the prophet, and have despised the Holy One of Israel, they shall wander in the flesh, and perish, and become a hiss and a byword, and be hated among all nations.

1 Ne. 19:13
PM 528
1 Ne. 19:13–14
MLM 225
1 Ne. 19:13–16
AF 334
CR81-A 18
1 Ne. 19:13–17
MD 393

1 Ne. 19:14–17
MD 14
EM 2:705

two thousand years are but faint echoes of the tribulations of their fathers.

19.14.10—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

19.14.18—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

19.15 The Jews of Jesus' day have long since found themselves in the world of spirits where they have continued to anguish over their lot in time and in eternity. But there is respite, testifies Zenos, a time when the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ will once again be offered to them and they will prove to be somewhat more receptive. Their salvation in that day will depend in large measure upon their willingness and ability to put away their anger and despair. Any hope that the Jews might have for redemption will come as their posterity receives the truths that they once rejected. The promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will be fulfilled among the Jews and they will be blessed with the rest of the House of Israel.

19.15.8—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

19.15.22—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

19.16 The Diaspora has not been an effect felt only among the Jews, but one which has scattered the entire house of Israel. The children of Jacob are to be found among every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. For that reason, the gathering of Israel will be carried out in every corner of the earth. The faithful will be taught the principles of eternity and they will receive all of the saving ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ at the hands of the servants of God who have been authorized to exercise the power of the priesthood in their behalf. Zenos' Allegory speaks of the grafting that will take place in the latter days (see *JA-C 5*) and Jacob himself explains the importance of having a sincere heart and a contrite spirit in that day (see *JA-C 6*).

19.16.22—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

19.16.36—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

19.16.37—*Zenos*—Another Israelite prophet who, like Zenock, was a scion of Joseph, he who was sold into Egypt, and one of the direct ancestors of the family of Lehi (see *3 NE-C 10.16*). The prophecy of Zenos begins with Nephi's testimony that the prophet knew of the burial of the Savior and continues through verse 17. Jacob, the brother of Nephi quotes the entire Allegory of Zenos in his writings in order to explain how a people who once having rejected the Son of God could

15 Nevertheless, when that day cometh, saith the prophet, that they no more turn aside their hearts against the Holy One of Israel, then will he remember the covenants which he made to their fathers.

1 Ne. 19:15
EM 1:142
1 Ne. 19:15–16
AF 343

16 Yea, *then will he remember the isles of the sea; yea, and all the people who are of the house of Israel, will I gather in, saith the Lord, according to the words of the prophet Zenos, from the four quarters of the earth.

*p. 52
1 Ne. 19:16
AF 333, 512
AGQ 4:139

ever be established again as a covenant people (see *JA-C 4.15–18* and *JA-C 5–6*). Alma cites Zenos in order to demonstrate to the Zoramites that they did not need a synagogue in order to worship God (see (*AL-C 33.2–11*)). He also uses that same prophet to inspire them to believe in the coming of the Son of God (see *AL-C 33.12–15*). Amulek refers to Zenos as well (see *AL-C 34.7*) in conjunction with the atonement of Jesus Christ. Nephi testifies of the martyrdom of Zenos (see *HE-C 8.19*). Samuel bears witness that Zenos prophesied that there would come a time when the Lamanites would come to a knowledge of the truth, no doubt in conjunction with the Allegory of Zenos recorded by Jacob in his testimony of the same effect.

19.17 All the nations of the earth will be blessed because of the children of Israel which will be among them. Abraham was promised that all the nations of the earth would be blessed because of his own posterity, and the gathering in the latter days will, in large measure, be a manifestation of the fulfillment of that promise. The prophet Jeremiah declared that the gathering of the last days would be of such a grand nature that the children of Israel would consider it more wonderful than the exodus from Egypt.

19.17.15—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

19.18 Nephi had seen the ultimate destruction of his people, but knew that a portion of his posterity would survive. His counsel to remember the Lord Jesus Christ pertained to all those who would follow him. Their happiness in time and in eternity hinged upon their ability to fully keep the covenants made through the ordinances of the Gospel of Christ, to take upon themselves the name of Christ, to observe his commandments in their daily lives, and to remember him always.

19.18.3—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

19.19 The Book of Mormon was written as “Another Testament of Christ” for the primary benefit of the descendants of Lehi. The promises received by the ancient prophets of the Americas were dependent upon their records surviving and being made available to their posterity. Nephi had been told that the preserved records of his people would also be made available to the Gentiles (see 13.35–36). It is also clear that Nephi suspected that his writings would also be made available to the entire House of Israel one day (see 13.39–42) and for that reason addressed himself to all of the House of Israel.

19.19.9—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

19.20 Lehi and Nephi were perfectly aware that the city of Jerusalem would soon be destroyed by the Babylonians. They knew just as assuredly as Jeremiah and the other prophets had known what was about to transpire. Lehi would relate to his family the open vision which he had of the destruction of their

17 Yea, and all the earth shall see the salvation of the Lord, saith the prophet; every nation, kindred, tongue and people shall be blessed.

18 And I, Nephi, have written these things unto my people, that perhaps I might persuade them that they would remember the Lord their Redeemer.

19 Wherefore, I speak unto all the house of Israel, if it so be that they should obtain these things.

20 For behold, I have workings in the spirit, which doth weary me even that all my joints are weak, for those who are at Jerusalem; for had

1 Ne. 19:18
CR93-A 14

homeland (see 2 NE-C 1.3–4). Nephi does not describe in detail any visions that he may have had regarding the fall of the Kingdom of Judah and of the ravishing of the city, but his spiritual knowledge regarding their fate and of the horrors which were about to descend upon them distressed him deeply. His sentiments were similar to those of any man who is aware of having just escaped a violent and painful death.

19.20.25—*Jerusalem*—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

19.20.43—*prophets*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

19.21 Nephi saw his developing circumstances clearly as a fulfillment of prophecies which he found written upon the Plates of Brass. It is a wonderful but startling experience to suddenly come face to face with the foreknowledge of God and that of His chosen servants.

19.21.8—*prophets*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

19.22 Perhaps at this point it would be well to review the original chapter divisions that appeared in the First Edition of the Book of Mormon in order to explain the division which appears here between verses 21 and 22 of the current format. In doing so, we ought not to disparage the efforts of any, neither the composers of the First Edition nor those who attempted with the current format to make the text more readily accessible to the students of the Book of Mormon. Chapter I related those events which brought about the escape from Jerusalem by Lehi and his family together with the retrieval of the Brass Plates from Laban. Chapter II recounted the invitation of the family of Ishmael to join Lehi on his journey to the promised land, together with his accounting of the Vision of the Tree of Life. Chapter III narrates Nephi’s own experiences with the messengers of God and the Vision of the Tree of Life and other revelations. Chapter IV contains Nephi’s explanation of the Vision to his older brothers. Chapter V contains a short history of the company’s travels in the wilderness, their eventual arrival in the promised land, and Nephi’s teachings to his brethren from the Brass Plates, particularly the archetypal aspects of Moses’ experiences in the wilderness, together with the writings of men like Zenos who apparently had seen his posterity in some detail. In Chapter VI, Nephi teaches his brethren regarding the scattering and gathering of Israel as contained in the writings of Isaiah. Chapter VII constitutes Nephi’s commentary on chapters 48 and 49 of Isaiah. The original break at verse 22 was the point where Nephi introduced his switch to the writings of Isaiah,

19.22.8—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a

not the Lord been merciful, to show unto me concerning them, even as he had prophets of old, I should have perished also.

21 And he surely did show unto the prophets of old all things concerning them; and also he did show unto many concerning us; wherefore, it must needs be that we know concerning them for they are written upon the plates of brass.

{Chapter VI}

{¶—1830}

22 Now it came to pass that I, Nephi, did teach my brethren these things; and it came to pass that I did read many things to them, which were engraven upon the plates of brass, that they might know concerning the doings of the Lord in other lands, among people of old.

1 Ne. 19:21
MD 103
EM 1:158

1 Ne. 19:22–23
EM 2:699, 701
EM 3:1027

faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

19.22.13–14—*these things*—That is to say, the prophecies made by Zenos and others regarding the events surround the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He would continue to resort to the Brass Plates for his teaching content.

19.22.47–48—*other lands*—The family of Nephi was not the only portion of the House of Israel to be led away into the four corners of the world. Many of the prophets whose writings were to be found upon the Plates of Brass were knowledgeable regarding these scattered remnants of Israel as well.

19.22.50–52—*people of old*—Nephi had already referred to the archetypal aspects of the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai, and there were undoubtedly many other narrations which could easily be applied to the circumstances in which the family of Lehi found itself.

19.23 Nephi resorted to the writings of Isaiah because of that great prophet's ability to be as direct and inclusive as was possible regarding the mind of God concerning the House of Israel in all of its scattered fragments. In addition, Isaiah's witness of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh is so clear as to be undeniable. Nephi will spend a great deal of time and effort referring to the writings of Isaiah in order to prove to his posterity without question the fact that a man of God may know intimate details about the future long before they transpire.

19.23.14–16—*book of Moses*—Some fuss might be generated by the singularity of this phrase. The Jews, however, considered the five books of Moses to be a single volume, the Torah, which they called the "Five Fiftths of the Law". The term "Pentateuch" is of Greek origin meaning "five volumes", a perception passed on into Latin translations and ultimately into the current translations of the Bible.

19.24 Nephi teaches his brethren with clarity and candor. Many of the circumstances surrounding their travels in the wilderness and of their separation from their own people troubled the family deeply. Nephi testifies that he found comfort in the scriptures and particularly in the writings of Isaiah. He wished that his brethren and his posterity would not despair when they felt that they were alone or abandoned. The promises were in place and the blessings would eventually come if they would simply wait upon the Lord and have confidence in his love for them.

19.24.13—*prophet*—Isaiah, of course.

19.24.18—*remnant*—Like unto the fragment of cloth that survived the shredding of Joseph's coat of many colors. Captain Moroni referred to the fact that a remnant of the coat had survived by which Jacob knew that a portion of the posterity of Joseph would survive (see *AL-C 46.23–26*). No doubt this narrative was engraved upon the Plates of Brass and the metaphor was familiar to any who perused the writings.

19.24.23—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

19.24.24—*branch*—A clear allusion to the Allegory of Zenos.

23 And I did read many things unto them which were written in the books of Moses; but that I might more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer I did read unto them that which was written by the prophet Isaiah; for I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning.

24 Wherefore I spake unto them, saying: Hear ye the words of the prophet, ye who are a remnant of the house of Israel, a branch who have been broken off; hear ye the words of the prophet, which were written unto all the house of Israel, and liken them unto yourselves, that ye may have hope as well as your brethren from whom ye have been broken off; for after this manner has the prophet written.

1 Ne. 19:23
AF 254
EM 1:107, 143,
180, 208
EM 2:701, 959
EM 3:1284,
1416
CR85-O 46
CR87-A 31
CR89-A 3
CR93-A 16
CR99-O 4, 6,
115
CR00-A 93
CR00-O 21
CR01-A 77, 108
1 Ne. 19:23–24
EM 4:1443
CR84-A 7
1 Ne. 19:24
PM 516
EM 1:158
EM 2:706

{Chapter VI, continued}
(Chapter 20)

20.1 The beginning of Isaiah 48. Much may be gained by attempting to perceive Nephi's delight in the writings of Isaiah and why he found them useful in encouraging his brothers. Laman and Lemuel had concluded that the residents of Jerusalem and environs were acceptable before the Lord. They drew their conclusions based on their outward observations of the religious conduct of the Jews, their apparent conformity to the Law of Moses. They complained bitterly that Lehi and Nephi had misjudged their fellow countrymen (see 17.20–22). Nephi had countered with a historical review of the children of Israel in the wilderness and concluded by declaring that they could not discern the wickedness of the Jews because they were as corrupt (see 17.23–45). In citing Isaiah 48 and 49 Nephi is attempting to help his brothers understand that he and his father were not the only ones unto whom the Lord had revealed the perfidy of the Jews in their day.

20.1.8—*Jacob*—The son of Isaac, the grandson of Abraham, and the founder of the House of Israel by means of the covenants received through the faithfulness the patriarchs.

20.1.16—*Israel*—The name given by the Lord God to Jacob as a result of his faithful adherence to the principles of eternal life that had been revealed to him through the sacred records of his day and the personal revelations which had come to him from time to time.

20.1.24–26—*waters of Judah*—The Hebrew word which is here translated as “waters” derives from ancient roots and means “water, juice”. It is also used as a euphemism for both “semen” and “urine”. Therefore the semantic scope of the word is quite broad. Most commentators have chosen to interpret the phrase here as referring to Judah's posterity, although there is great disagreement among the scholars as to what Isaiah intended. Several ancient manuscripts render this passage as “days of Judah” which has been thought incomprehensible by most readers of the text.

20.1.31–33—*waters of baptism*—This clarifying phrase was appended to the text of the third edition of the Book of Mormon by the Prophet Joseph Smith and resolves the intent of Isaiah directly, rather than leave the vast field of supposition to the learned of the world. At the point when Jeroboam, prince of Ephraim, broke away with nine of the other northern tribes of Israel to form the Kingdom of Israel, he also instituted rather odious heathen practices among his people that they might not look to Jerusalem for spiritual guidance. By the time Isaiah began prophesying, the northern Kingdom was in a state of advanced apostasy and corruption. What priesthood authority that they had once enjoyed was long since lost. Only the southern Kingdom of Judah maintained any degree of faithfulness to true principles and ordinances. Therefore, to equate the waters of Judah with the waters of baptism is completely consistent with the history of both peoples. Anyone who was legitimately baptized in Isaiah's day would have accepted that blessing at the hands of a priesthood bearer from the south. Isaiah in this verse is suggesting that although the children of Israel may have been properly baptized, they were not living in accordance with the covenants which they had taken upon themselves.

20.1.35—*swear*—The saints of God have always been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

20.1.55—*truth*—Truth is the absence of hypocrisy, a commodity in dire

1 HEARKEN and hear this, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, or out of the waters of baptism, who swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God *of Israel, yet they swear not in truth nor in righteousness.

1 Ne. 20
AF 252
MD 489
EM 1:146
EM 2:699, 700,
710
EM 3:1004,
1163, 1283
*p. 53
1 Ne. 20:1
MD 832
DS 2:323
MM 1:395
MM 2:355
MM 4:342

want throughout all of the land of Israel in the days of the prophet.

20.1.58—*righteousness*—Righteousness is the conscious choice to keep the commandments of God and to live by every word that proceeds forth from His mouth, whether by His own voice or the voice of His servants.

20.2 The children of Israel, and specifically the Jews of Jerusalem, confessed dependence upon the God of Heaven, yet in no practical way did they live their lives in accordance with that profession. Isaiah testifies repeatedly that true safety in any set of circumstances is in obedience to the voice of the Lord.

20.2.1—*Nevertheless*—Not in the King James translation, but clearly an integral part of Isaiah’s point. Notwithstanding the fact that they had drunken deeply from the cup of hypocrisy, the children of Israel still expected that they would be protected because they lived in the city where the House of the Lord was located.

20.2.14—*stay*—The Hebrew word which is here translated as “stay” derives from roots which mean “lean upon, take hold of”. In the days of Lehi and Nephi, this lack of dependence upon the Lord God had reached such a degree that they would not hearken to the warnings of Jeremiah and other prophets that their seeking of alliances against Babylon would be their undoing. If they would live by the Lord’s words, they would be protected, regardless of the rather counter-intuitive nature of His counsel.

20.2.20—*Israel*—The name given by the Lord God to Jacob as a result of his faithful adherence to the principles of eternal life that had been revealed to him through the sacred records of his day and the personal revelations which had come to him from time to time.

20.2.24–26—*Lord of Hosts*—Isaiah’s point is that in the conflict between nations, such as that which would rage between Egypt and Babylon during the time of Jeremiah’s ministry, the numbers and power of the warriors which God commanded were far superior to those that any combination of temporal powers could raise against the land of Israel. This is reminiscent of the experience of Elisha’s servant who was shown the vast assemblage of heavenly beings gathered to protect the prophet when the armies of the Syrians had descended upon Dothan. “Those that be for us are more than be for them,” Elisha testified.

20.3 If a person predicts enough things with sufficient variation, sooner or later something will transpire that might be construed as a fulfillment of the prediction. The Lord through Isaiah is bearing witness that those things which His servants will speak to the House of Israel will happen in short order, with astonishing clarity, leaving no doubt that they were possessed of the gift of prophecy. There is hardly a more difficult principle for the natural man to accept than prophecy. Fallen man has convinced himself that he is in control of his own destiny, as if the laws of the universe were formulated by himself or, at least, are at his command. Such men will be surprised to learn that what they do, even in their most subtle fashion, will not be unanticipated by the God of Heaven.

20.3.6–7—*former things*—Isaiah suggests that a perusal of the scriptures, the sacred records of the ancient prophets would clearly reveal the principles of revelation and how the Lord has dealt with the covenant people in a direct and immediate way, sometimes to their great hurt. Those who fail to learn the lessons of history will be compelled to relive them.

2 Nevertheless, they call themselves of the holy city, but they do not stay themselves upon the God of Israel, who is the Lord of Hosts; yea, the Lord of Hosts is his name.

3 Behold, I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I showed them. I did show them suddenly.

20.4 The giving of prophecy and the immediate fulfillment of such was done in Israel's past because of their hesitancy to believe that anyone, even the God of Heaven, could possibly know that which yet lay in the future.

20.4.11—*obstinate*—The Hebrew word which is here translated as “obstinate” derives from roots which mean “severe, churlish, cruel, grievous, hard-hearted, impudent”.

20.4.14–18—*neck is an iron sinew*—A tendon made of an inflexible material does not allow for freedom of movement. A neck composed of iron sinews allows for no surveillance, no extended observation. There is little or no perspective and a person debilitated in this fashion sees only that which is placed directly before him, directly in his field of vision.

20.4.21–22—*brow brass*—In reference to Israel's hard-headedness, unresponsiveness, and reluctance to be surprised by anything or anyone.

20.5 From whence come the great blessings of life? Israel in its idolatry perversely attributed every goodness to the gods which allowed vulgarity and immorality. They shunned righteousness because of the proscriptions made upon their fallen and carnal nature. Therefore, the conjunction of the prophecies and the fulfillment was to demonstrate that supernal wisdom which the Lord God alone possesses.

20.6 Having set before them a continual witness provided in the scriptures of the perspicuity of God, should not the children of Israel be sufficiently convinced of His superiority that they testify to the world of the virtues of their God? In the days of Abraham there was no one, even among the most learned of peoples, who knew as much as the Patriarch about as simple a matter as astronomy. The wisdom of Solomon was known throughout the world and held in such high esteem that all bowed to his understanding in his day. The covenant people, in the end, are the best informed people on the earth in all matters pertaining to eternal truth of all kinds.

20.6.3—*seen*—The traditional translation is rendered “Thou hast heard, see all this” which makes little or no sense, even with a great deal of wresting. The version from the Brass Plates is far more intelligible.

20.7 To the obstinate and perverse the Lord has revealed but little in order that they might not be condemned by their own lack of enthusiasm for the truth. The natural man has a tendency to weary of truth that is not applied into one's life immediately. Unfulfilled knowledge is passé; knowledge revealed out of order is not appreciated, even when its connection with all other truth is made clear. Hence, Paul on Mar's Hill had some difficulty in preaching the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ because the Greeks had already dealt with the principle of resurrection and had dismissed it for lack of evidence. The concept was no longer intellectually stimulating; it was no longer a “new thing”. God proposed to reveal to covenant Israel truths and events of which they had not heard before. In fact, He had already done so and they chose not to hear the words or understand the sentiments.

20.7.3—*created*—The Hebrew word which is here translated as “created” derives from roots which mean “cut, select, feed, formative process, choose”.

20.8 The House of Israel has frequently shut their ears to the words of the

4 And I did it because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;

5 And I have even from the beginning declared to thee; before it came to pass I showed them thee; and I showed them for fear lest thou shouldst say—mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image hath commanded them.

6 Thou hast seen and heard all this; and will ye not declare them? And that I have showed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.

7 They are created now, and not from the beginning, even before the day when thou heardest them not they were declared unto thee, lest thou shouldst say—Behold I knew them.

8 Yea, and thou heardest not; yea,

Lord through His prophets. They have refused to hear; they have refused to comprehend. Therefore, they have abided in willful ignorance.

20.8.27—*treacherously*—The Hebrew word which is here translated as “treacherously” derives from roots which mean “cover with a garment, act covertly, pillage, deceitful”.

20.8.32—*transgressor*—The Hebrew word which is here translated as “transgressor” derives from roots which mean “expansion, break away, trespass, apostatize, quarrel, offend, revolt”

20.8.35—*womb*—This is not a scriptural support for the concept of predestination, but rather an indication that generations were passing without righteousness in the home. Parents were not instructing their children to anything better than what they themselves were. Children were being born into wicked families. The destruction that took place during the flood of Noah’s day, the obliteration of the five cities of the plain that Abraham and Lot witnessed, and the destruction of the nations who inhabited the land of Palestine before the children of Israel were led in by Joshua, were all guilty of the same obstinacy and perversity.

20.9 This verse is a poetic couplet and in each half the Lord is testifying that he will not pursue the wicked for a time because of promises that He made in His own name to preserve the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The implication of the second half of the verse is that His longsuffering will allow many to come to the truth, repent of their sins, and ultimately find salvation notwithstanding their previous rebellions.

20.9.18—*from*—The King James translation has “for”. “Refrain from” is a couplet with “defer”. “Refrain for” would give the impression that the Lord is not exacting justice upon Israel because of them, when in fact He is withholding punishment temporarily because of the covenant that he made with Israel’s righteous ancestors.

20.10 This is another poetic couplet, the verbs “refined” and “chosen” providing the connection between the two clauses. Historically, the Lord has frequently extracted the faithful from wicked environments. Abraham in Chaldea, Israel in Egypt, Lehi’s family in Jerusalem serve as three examples among many. Often, however, the wicked and the righteous pass through extremity together, the wicked falling by the wayside as they are consumed in the crucible, the righteous ever more glorious in their sanctification.

20.10.5—*refined*—The Hebrew word which is here translated as “refined” derives from roots which mean “fuse, cast, melt, purge away”. This is generally used in conjunction with gold smelting.

20.10.6—*thee*—In the King James version of this verse, the phrase “but not with silver” follows “thee”. There are textual problems with this phrase with which scholars have wrestled for centuries. The version from the Brass Plates suggests that the phrasing was a scribal gloss which inadvertently became part of Isaiah’s text. The resultant academic polemic, therefore, is a moot one.

20.10.9—*chosen*—The Hebrew word which is here translated as “chosen” derives from roots which mean “try, select”. Some scholars have rendered this word as “purchased” in order to make sense of the “but not with silver” phrase. As has been shown above, this is unnecessary (see 20.10.6). Had not there been a definitive and authoritative resolution of the matter, the “purchased” argument might have carried the day, adding that much more overall confusion in understanding the writings

thou knewest not; yea, from that time thine ear was not opened; for I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.

{9—1830}

9 Nevertheless, for my name’s sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain from thee, that I cut thee not off.

10 For, behold, I have refined thee, I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

1 Ne. 20:10
MD 624
CR89-A 30
CR93-A 98
CR00-O 43

of Isaiah.

20.10.13—*furnace*—The Hebrew word which is here translated as “furnace” is derived from roots which mean “dig through, pot, crucible”. The idea conveyed by the word is of a vessel in which ore is heated and smelted rather than of a blazing fire in which everything is consumed and lost.

20.11 In some respects, the Lord’s comment here in Isaiah is similar to the sentiments expressed by the master of the vineyard in the Allegory of Zenos. Both had invested an enormous amount of time and effort in nurturing their creations, hoping that they would be profitable and productive. The master of the vineyard continually labored with the olive trees until they produced good fruit; he would not summarily cut them down and burn them at the first sign of failure. The Lord expresses much the same feelings in the mouth of Isaiah when he says that he will not allow the corruption to continue nor will he begin with another people. Therefore, the only recourse is to purify them as they are, “refining” out the dross until they are perfected in all things. All this because of the ancient covenants that He entered into with His righteous servants; that is to say, for His name’s sake, the name by which the covenants were established..

20.11.18—*suffer*—The King James version renders this clause “for how should my name be polluted” The text taken from the Brass Plates is far more intelligible and far more illuminating on the whole.

20.12 That the speaker here is Jehovah, the premortal spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ is clearly stated. Although one could argue that any title bestowed upon the Savior is equal to those which the Father possesses is unnecessary and injects confusion into the relationship between the House of Israel and its God. However, it is clear that from time to time, Jehovah speaks of himself in the third person when referring to his role as the promised Messiah

20.12.5—*Jacob*—The son of Isaac, the grandson of Abraham, and the founder of the House of Israel by means of the covenants received through the faithfulness the patriarchs.

20.12.7—*Israel*—The name given by the Lord God to Jacob as a result of his faithful adherence to the principles of eternal life that had been revealed to him through the sacred records of his day and the personal revelations which had come to him from time to time.

20.12.17—*first*—Among the children of God, Jesus is pre-eminent, the Firstborn. He was the first to rise from the dead, the first fruits of them that slept. He is the Alpha, the beginning letter of the Greek alphabet (and of many others alphabets by the way), meaning that all things that have been revealed from God have been through the mouth of the Son.

20.12.23—*last*—Jesus, more than any other man, has descended below all things. His condescension is unfathomable. He has born the burdens of all men, the faithful servant of all. He is the Omega, the last letter of the Greek alphabet, meaning that his is the last word; all judgment has been given into his hands. Ultimately, anyone entering into the Kingdom of God, in any of its inherent glories, will only do so with the approval of him whose right it is to reign.

20.13 The Lord Jesus Christ was the instrument by which all things came into existence. The heavens and the earth were organized at his command; the elements which constitute this sphere hearkened to the voice of authority, and continue to do so. All things have submitted and will submit to the Lord God

11 For mine own sake, yea, for mine own sake will I do this, for I will not suffer my name to be polluted, and I will not give my glory unto another.

1 Ne. 20:11
CR86-A 66

{9—1830}

12 Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel my called, for I am he; I am the first, and I am also the last.

13 Mine hand hath also laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens. I call unto them and they

of Israel. There will come a time when every eye will see, every knee will bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ, the sovereign of this planet and all of its denizens. Eventually, all things, whether physically or metaphorical, will be judged by the Lord. They will stand before his judgment seat and held accountable for their weaknesses, transgressions, follies, and sins. They will be weighed in the balance of justice and mercy and by their own choices will they inherit their destiny.

20.14 The destruction of the Babylonian Empire serves as an archetype for all that is in opposition to the will of God. It embodies worldliness, the carnal fascination with wealth, power, and fame. Babylon is one of a myriad of nations which have momentarily prospered and then fallen into ruin by the will of God. That the Father has used mortal instruments to accomplish His will upon the earth is common knowledge to those who are familiar with the scriptures. Cyrus and the Persians did destroy the Babylonian Empire, but they were no more than tools wielded in the hands of the Almighty.

20.14.2—*ye*—That is to say, all of the House of Israel should assemble together and listen to the word of the Lord (see 20.12).

20.14.9—*them*—Most scholars have concluded that the antecedent for “them” are the false gods and idols mentioned earlier in the chapter, those to which the apostate Israelites had credited with predicting the future (see 20.5). It is likely, however, that the Lord through Isaiah is referring to all of creation. What can be learned about the future of mankind and the destiny of the earth by merely contemplating the products of creation?

20.14.15—*them*—That is to say, who among mortals have ever been able to explain the meaning of life based solely on a study of this world in its fallen state.?

20.14.20—*him*—Most scholars have suggested that this is direct reference to Cyrus the king of Persia who would eventually bring down the wrath of God upon the Babylonians. In the greater scope of things, however, it is the Messiah who is loved, the Supreme Deliverer who will fulfill all that he promised to do before the foundations of the earth were laid.

20.14.33—*them*—Every aspect of the creation, the planets in their movement, the earth and its inhabitants, all declare the reality of Supreme Creator, one who is motivated by truth, beauty, and love.

20.14.41—*Babylon*—Isaiah’s prophecies were given to the children of Israel in the middle of the eighth century BC, a hundred and fifty years before the Babylonian Captivity and over 200 hundred years before the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. Yet even before Nabopolassar’s star had risen into the heavens, Babylon and Chaldea had enjoyed a long period of increasing material prosperity which culminated during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.

20.14.49—*Chaldeans*—The land of Chaldea traditionally refers to the southern regions of the Mesopotamian Valley nearest to what is now referred to as the Persian Gulf. Occasionally, the name would refer to larger tracts of territory when the inhabitants were militarily more proactive. According to anthropologists, there came a time when the “Chaldeans” came to mean the educated class of the region, especially once the Babylonian empire became extensive. This educated caste constituted the priests, magicians, and astronomers of the society.

20.15 This again is supposed by many to be a direct reference to Cyrus, but this is true only in a reflective way, inasmuch as Cyrus would be an instrument

stand up together.

14 All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; who among them hath declared these things unto them? The Lord hath loved him; yea, and he will fulfil his word which he hath declared by them; and he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall come upon the Chaldeans.

15 Also, saith the Lord; I the Lord, yea, I have spoken; yea, I

in the hands of God at that particular time in the world's history to accomplish that finite piece of work. Isaiah's prophecies embrace far more territory than that small plot of historical ground. This is the Lord's direct reference to the calling of Jesus as the Christ and His testimony of the Savior's perfect righteousness by which the atoning sacrifice was accomplished.

20.15.16—*him*—In reference to the Lord Jesus Christ who is the mouth-piece for the God of Heaven, His executor in all things pertaining to this earth. All divine knowledge has come through the offices of the Christ, the Firstborn, and that of his chosen servants. There is no man anywhere who knows any truth of eternity who has not acquired it from Jesus Christ and his emissaries.

20.15.21—*brought*—The Hebrew word which is here translated as "brought" derives from roots which mean "to go, to come". The sentiment conveyed is similar to that of the word "apostle" in Greek. Jesus was, as Paul declared, "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession". The Savior was "brought" or "sent" to earth through the gift and power of God, through His divine will.

20.15.29—*prosperous*—The Lord Jesus Christ accomplished his task of bringing the redemption of mankind from death and hell, because he willingly and perfectly obeyed his Father in all things. No other man has been "prosperous" in mortality. We are all, in the words of King Benjamin, "unprofitable servants".

20.16 The Messiah serves as the personal emissary of the Godhead. As the Son, the Christ faithfully represents the will of the Father and the Holy Ghost and has done so since the days of Adam and Eve, when the earth fell as a result of that pair partaking of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

20.16.2—*ye*—The Lord is still addressing the House of Israel (see 20.12 and 20.14)

20.16.5—*me*—Some scholars have suggested that this is in reference to Cyrus or to Isaiah himself, but it is clear in the context that the Messiah is speaking here in the first person, bearing testimony of his role in the governance of this world since the beginning of time.

20.17 This constitutes the testimony of God the Father as to the credentials of the Messiah. The Son has always perfectly communicated to the children of men that which the Father wished them to know.

20.17.12—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

20.18 Keeping the commandments of God brings a peace and prosperity that cannot be overlooked by those who are not participants in it. The children of men are world-weary and in their most troubled hours yearn for that which cannot be found by an appeal to the carnality of this fallen earth. To observe a people dwelling in harmony with one another, mind and heart, with no poverty among them is like a city set on a hill. If the House of Israel had fully observed the principles and ordinances which they had revealed unto them by the prophets, seers, and revelators, the inhabitants of the earth would have long since been converted to the fullness of the truth

20.18.12—*peace*—Lehi spoke similar words to his son Laman when he expressed his desire that the young man would be like the river where

have called him to declare, I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.

{*9*—1830}

16 Come ye near unto me; I have not spoken in secret; from the beginning, from the time that it was declared have I spoken; and the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me.

17 And *thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I have sent him, the Lord thy God who teacheth thee to profit, who leadeth thee by the way thou shouldst go, hath done it.

18 O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments—then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.

* p. 54
1 Ne. 20:17
EM 2:705

they were camped in the wilderness, “continually running into the fountain of all righteousness” (see 2.9). The Hebrew word which is here translated as “peace” derives from roots which mean “safe, well, happy, friendly, welfare, prosperity”. “Prosperity” as a result of obedience is fundamental to the Gospel of Jesus Christ (see 20.15.29)

20.18.19—*righteousness*—In speaking of the Millennium and the attendant peace and prosperity that would typify that time, Isaiah said that the “earth would be as full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea”. Righteousness will prevail upon the earth as that proper example is presented to the children of men by the children of God.

20.19 Had the children of Israel been faithful in observing the commandments of God from the day that they were revealed to them, they would have already been the recipients of every blessing which the Father had to offer His children, including eternal life, the power of eternal increase. That eternal increase is coupled with the metaphor that Abraham’s posterity would be as numerous as the “sands of the seashore”. Isaiah adds the concept that the posterity of the righteous would be as vast as the waters of all of earth’s oceans.

20.19.8—*sand*—That is to say, their children would have been as numberless as the sands of the seashore, the blessing given to Abraham as a result of his faithfulness.

20.19.16—*gravel*—Most scholars have concluded that the “fish” of the sea is what is meant by “gravel”, but that semantic value, as appealing as it might be, is a bit of a stretch. It is far more likely that it is in reference to the amount of water in the depths of the ocean.

20.20 Redemption does not come as a result of economic prosperity; one cannot purchase salvation with the things of this world. No nation in the history of mankind ever tried to do more than Babylonia to produce happiness and prosperity by means of the goods of the earth. In this they failed miserably. True happiness is a product of righteousness, which itself is derived from faith, repentance, and acceptance of the saving ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There is no city but Zion where the salvation of God is fully manifested to children of men. Israel, by keeping the commandments of God, should invite the entire world to partake of the goodness of God. The scarcity of true saints of the Most High in the world would indicate that a greater effort in obedience is required.

20.20.5—*Babylon*—Isaiah’s prophecies were given to the children of Israel in the middle of the eighth century BC, a hundred and fifty years before the Babylonian Captivity and over 200 hundred years before the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. Yet even before Nabopolassar’s star had risen into the heavens, Babylon and Chaldea had enjoyed a long period of increasing material prosperity which culminated during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.

20.20.10—*Chaldeans*—The land of Chaldea traditionally refers to the southern regions of the Mesopotamian Valley nearest to what is now referred to as the Persian Gulf. Occasionally, the name would refer to larger tracts of territory when the inhabitants were militarily more proactive. According to anthropologists, there came a time when the “Chaldeans” came to mean the educated class of the region, especially once the Babylonian empire became extensive. This educated caste constituted the priests, magicians, and astronomers of the society.

20.20.32—*redeemed*—There is no other name given whereby men may be saved, except that of the Lord Jesus Christ. This has been true since the

19 Thy seed also had been as the sand; the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me.

{*9*—1830}

20 Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter to the end of the earth; say ye: The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob.

1 Ne. 20:20
AF 252
MD 489
EM 2:568

days of Adam and Eve.

20.20.35—*Jacob*—The son of Isaac, the grandson of Abraham, and the founder of the House of Israel by means of the covenants received through the faithfulness the patriarchs.

20.21 Although this is a direct reference to the redemption of Israel as they exited the land of Egypt, yet the archetype serves as a promise to all those who are in distress in this life, the mortal wilderness. Through our willing acceptance of the principles and ordinances of the Gospel, living by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God, we will be nourished by the Father and preserved from the eternal realities which await the wicked.

20.22 Those who refuse to hearken to the voice of God and His servants will be left unto themselves to welter in a world in which peace cannot be found. Without the covenants of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, there can be no sustaining trust and confidence between men.

21.1 What follows is the representation of Isaiah 49 as it was to be found on the Brass Plates six hundred years before the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. Since it was inscribed upon the plates not many years after they were penned by Isaiah, we may properly conclude that the text given here is far more likely to conform to the original text written in the eighth century before Christ than any of the extant manuscripts with which we are familiar. A close comparison between the first verse in this chapter and the first verse of the King James version reveals that the first half of the current text is material missing from modern translations. How and why the elision came to be may be easily surmised. It is to the elders of the Jews, the spiritual leaders of Israel, that the prophet points to explain the impending destruction by the Assyrians and the devastation that will later befall the Kingdom of Judah by the Babylonians. Lehi and his family sought refuge in the wilderness because of the intense persecution that was incited against them when Lehi began to cry repentance to the people. Throughout history we may read of the expulsion of the righteous from their place of residence shortly before the city or the nation of the wicked is decimated. The children of Israel have been scattered world wide as a result.

21.1.8—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

21.1.13–14—*broken off*—Again, this is a similar image as that used by Zenos in his Allegory. The branches of the olive tree are taken from the mother tree and transplanted elsewhere.

21.1.27–28—*my people*—We must ask the question as to who the first person narrator is here. Some scholars have concluded that it is Isaiah himself. Others have suggested that it is an aggregate voice for the whole House of Israel. Yet in light of the context can there be any doubt that the personage speaking is he who has charge of the covenant people? This can be none other than the Messiah, *The Israel*, the “One

21 And they thirsted not; he led them through the deserts; he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them; he clave the rock also and the waters gushed out.

22 And notwithstanding he hath done all this, and greater also, there is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked.

{Chapter VI, continued} (Chapter 21)

{~~9~~—1830}

1 AND again: Hearken, O ye house of Israel, all ye that are broken off and are driven out because of the wickedness of the pastors of my people; yea, all ye that are broken off, that are scattered abroad, who are of my people, O house of Israel. Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken ye people from far; the Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.

1 Ne. 20:22
MD 836

1 Ne. 21
AF 252
MD 489
EM 1:146
EM 2:699, 700,
701, 710
EM 3:1004,
1163, 1283

who prevails with God” in the ultimate sense.

21.1.63–64—*called me*—The Messiah was foreordained to his calling before the foundations of the earth were laid. The “Anointed Savior” was known unto Adam and Eve while they were still in the Garden of Eden, before their transgression and the fall of the earth.

21.2 Again, this verse is a couplet. The sword in hand, the arrow in its quiver; both secreted until the proper time and place. The Savior, as the archetype, spent the first thirty years of his life in waiting, although he was a “sharp sword” and a “polished shaft” long before his baptism by John. So also are those who bear the priesthood of God, the holy order after that of the Son of God.

21.2.9–10—*sharp sword*—We ought not to be surprised at some of the deletions from the ancient text of Isaiah’s prophecy. The “sharp sword” pierced the wicked elders of Israel to the heart, so explicit was Isaiah about their spiritual crimes against themselves, against their people, and against their God. As Nephi testified to his older brothers, undoubtedly influenced by the imagery contained in the writings of Isaiah, it is the truth that cuts through all falsehood until it is laid bare to the world (see 16.1–3).

21.2.13–16—*shadow of his hand*—The “shadow” of one’s hand is the palm, in which the “sword” is wielded. The Messiah does not speak of his own volition, but is guided and directed by the Father of All. Those things which he speaks are those things which God would have him say; in fact, he can do nothing else.

21.2.25–26—*polished shaft*—The most perfect of arrows, designed and prepared for a specific task. The shaft is neither the bow nor the archer who hefts the weapon. It, like the sword, is prepared to pierce to the very heart. There are many polished shafts in the quiver of the Almighty, but the Savior is the finest.

21.2.29—*quiver*—The safe place where the arrows are kept until they are needed in battle.

21.3 God the Eternal Father has said that it is His work and His glory to bring to pass the immortality and the eternal life of man. Through the atoning sacrifice and the literal resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, that work and glory is accomplished. Jesus was called up and anointed in the presence of his brethren to do the Father’s will, to be the servant of God and man.

21.3.10—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

21.4 When one contemplates the history of the world, even of those who have pertained to the covenants of God through their fathers, the contrast between the numbers of the redeemed and the numbers of the wicked is stark. Of the billions of spirit children of have come here upon the earth, how many of them have directly responded to the invitation of the Lord Jesus Christ to receive forgiveness and exaltation at his hands? Nonetheless, the Son of God has descended beneath them all and purchased them with his own blood that they might be saved, even as many as would chose life over death. Were it not for the labors performed among the countless dead in the world of spirits, there would be but few qualified for eternal life at the last day. The enormity of the task and the cupidity of the hearts of men in things spiritual caused the

2 And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;

3 And said unto me: Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.

4 Then I said, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught and in vain; surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.

Lord Jesus, the greatest of all, to tremble at the prospect of suffering in their behalf. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus submitted to the will of the Father because he knew that there is no salvation anywhere else, neither for himself nor for any of the children of God.

21.5 The atoning sacrifice of the Savior was in fulfillment of the promises made to the saints of old, particularly Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The redemption of mankind was to begin with the posterity of those who had received the blessings of the Patriarchal Priesthood by covenant. Ancient Israel would be brought before the throne of God cleansed and purified from the sins of mortal life. This atoning sacrifice would take place in a time when Israel was still scattered into every part of the earth. The Jews who dwelt in Jerusalem and environs did not constitute the entire House of Israel, even though they had been somewhat gathered from their dispersion at the time of the mortal ministry of the Savior.

21.5.20—*Jacob*—The son of Isaac, the grandson of Abraham, and the founder of the House of Israel by means of the covenants received through the faithfulness the patriarchs.

21.5.25—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

21.6 The restitution of the covenant people was a monumental task to be certain, but by comparison, the salvation of the billions who spent their lives upon the earth without the truth, without the ordinances, without the hope and peace of the Gospel of Christ would be unfathomable. So, therefore, the labor of the Lord Jesus Christ and his chosen servants is to bring light and truth to the minds and hearts of those who, during their mortal sojourn upon the earth, never knew of the opportunities and blessings which might be theirs. With the death of Jesus, before his resurrection from the tomb, the work for the dead was initiated in the world of spirits, where those who had been ordained to the priesthood while living upon the earth were commissioned by Christ to exercise that authority among those who had not been as fortunate as themselves. Thus the breach between the wicked and the righteous, the great gulf placed between them, was bridged, and the tongues of many were wetted with the waters of salvation.

21.6.21—*Jacob*—The son of Isaac, the grandson of Abraham, and the founder of the House of Israel by means of the covenants received through the faithfulness the patriarchs.

21.6.28—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

21.6.39—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

{9—1830}

5 And now, saith the Lord—that formed me from the womb that I should be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him—though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.

6 And he said: It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth.

1 Ne. 21:6–9
CR99-O 90

21.7 The kings and potentates of the earth have seldom worshipped the God of Heaven properly. Mostly they have worshipped themselves and the things of the earth which give them carnal pleasure. Preaching Christ to a man or woman steeped in the vanities of this fallen world is almost a fool's errand, inasmuch as the things of the spirit are foreign to them, incomprehensible and therefore without merit. But all kings and their subjects pass out of this life and in their degraded spiritual condition wait in darkness for something better than their miserable condition. The servants of Christ who dwell among them will present to them the fullness of the Gospel. Those who receive that light will be redeemed from their personal hell, as God lives. In the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times, the day will come when every eye will see, every knee will bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ, even those who once mocked the Son and his faithful servants.

21.7.8—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

21.7.43—*faithful*—In the King James translation, the phrase “and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee” follows. How and why this emendation to Isaiah's text occurred we do not know.

21.8 There is no other name given under heaven by which men can be saved. It was a name given by the Father himself before the foundations of the earth were laid. The name was given as a product of the Father's perfect love for His children, providing them a way whereby they might enter into His Kingdom and find peace and exaltation. The earth itself will one day be sanctified in every way and will serve as the habitation of the faithful from every generation who once lived upon it in mortality.

21.8.7–8—*acceptable time*—The Hebrew word which is here translated as “acceptable” derives from roots which mean “delight, desire, favor, good pleasure, voluntary will”.

21.8.14–17—*isles of the sea*—For the ancient Hebrews, the isles of the sea were defined as any place one would have to go by ship. The effect of the imagery is to persuade the entire population of the earth that, regardless of ethnic background or ancestry, every man, woman, and child, would one day have an opportunity to accept all truth from the servants of God. The phrase “O Isles of the sea” is missing from the text of the King James version of this verse.

21.8.21–23—*day of salvation*—Specifically, the day of salvation began in the Garden of Gethsemane and ended at three o'clock in the afternoon on the cross outside the city walls of Jerusalem. One's personal day of salvation comes with faith in Christ, repentance, and the ordinances of the Gospel of Christ.

21.8.36–37—*my servant*—The peoples of all the earth were to be given the opportunity to accept the covenant of Christ.

21.9 Whether by the hand of God or by the hand of His servants, it is the same. Those who are prisoners in any fashion may find liberty through the offices of the Lord Jesus Christ. Through the atoning sacrifice, the spirits of men are freed from the burden of sin and transgression. Through the resurrection men are delivered from the tomb and the inevitable domination of Satan.

21.9.2—*thou*—The question here is whether the antecedent of “thou” is “the isles of the sea” or whether the Lord has returned to his personal

7 Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nations abhorreth, to servant of rulers: Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful.

8 Thus saith the Lord: In an acceptable time have I heard thee, O *isles of the sea, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee my servant for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;

* p. 55

9 That thou mayest say to the prisoners: Go forth; to them that sit in darkness: Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places.

instructions to the Messiah begun in verse 5. Verse 8 appears to be a momentary aside from those instructions, inasmuch as it is addressed to the “isles of the sea”.

21.9.7—*prisoners*—If the antecedent of “thou” is the “isles of the sea” then the implication of this passage is that the Gospel of Christ would be sent into all of the world, that the principles of salvation and exaltation would thereby liberate all who were in bondage to sin and ignorance. If “thou” is in reference to the Messiah, then the same interpretation applies, but also extends to the dead, those who dwell in the spirit world, particularly spirit prison. The “going forth” is a direct reference to the redemption of the spirit from the bonds of their weaknesses, sins, and follies, particularly those who did not repent while in mortality.

21.9.11—*them*—Those in darkness are the spiritually blind, whether among the living or the dead. It is also in reference to the tomb. To “show” oneself is primarily in reference to the resurrection.

21.9.26—*pastures*—This pastoral image is consistent with the notion that the Messiah is the Good Shepherd, providing every needful thing for his flock.

21.10 The verse continues the pastoral image begun in verse 9. The way to exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom has been made clear through the life and ministry of the Savior. Once upon the path he trod, once ensconced within the flock of Christ, the children of the covenant may have confidence that like the sheep of the Good Shepherd, they have nothing to fear from the natural elements and they will be nourished by him to perfection.

21.11 Within the pastoral image, the path through the mountains is a great comfort to the flock.

21.11.6–7—*my mountains*—In a general sense, all mountains pertain to the Father, He who created all things through His Son. But there are certain “mountains” which He has specifically termed “His own”, mountains which define “His way”, “His highways” to exaltation, even the Temples of the Most High.

21.12 Regardless as to who has been the addressee of the past few verses, the Lord here directs his remarks to the covenant people, the essence of the message being that there are those who will receive salvation and exaltation that had not been previously considered possible candidates by those who had already accepted the covenants of God. The House of Israel, the heritage of the Lord, may have once considered itself a narrow people, few in numbers, but the Lord testifies that this not to be the case in the eternities, that there are vast numbers previously uncounted who will be numbered in the eternal flock of God.

21.12.6—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

21.12.9—*these*—One may appropriately ask, what is the antecedent for this demonstrative pronoun? Is it not in reference to the flock, the sheep that have been gathered from every corner of the earth? Is it not those who have been redeemed from the realms of the dead? Is it not the whole family of mankind who have accepted the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

21.12.13—*far*—Is this not a direct reference to the scattering of Israel

10 They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor the sun smite them; for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

11 And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted.

12 And then, O house of Israel, behold, these shall come from far; and lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim.

since the founding of the covenant people? Can it not also refer to the great distance spiritually the people of the earth would have to travel in order to be found within the pale of the Gospel of Christ?

21.12.19—*north*—Is this not in part a reference to the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel whose descendants may be found in those lands through which the exiles passed many centuries ago? Is it not a reference to those bodies of saints who will be returned from those places to which the Lord led them?

21.12.23—*west*—Is this not in part a reference to the children of Lehi, those who were led out of the city of Jerusalem and through difficulties and hardships of every kind were ultimately placed in a land which literally lies “west” of the Holy Land? Will not the remnant of his posterity, the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas, be given complete access to the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

21.12.29—*Sinim*—The scholars of the world are at some pains to identify this land. Some have placed it within the boundaries of Egypt, at Elephantine or Aswan. Others have suggested the Far East, China as the place where these people originated. Still others have identified the western coast of Africa or the east coast of the Americas, suggesting the profusion of “bushes” or “trees” (their interpretation of “Sinim”) constitutes the distinguishing characteristic. In other words, any place with a forest will do. There is, perhaps, more truth to that analysis than anyone suspects, even those most sanguine about the theory. The fact of the matter is that no one can declare with certainty the location of this land and people, and perhaps that is the point.

{9—1830}

21.13 Not everyone has rejoiced when the blessings of God have been poured out upon His covenant people in an outward and tangible way. Many have bristled, and chaffed, others have decried that which they did not understand, still others have openly fought against the saints of God in an attempt to deprive them of their inheritance. Those filled with the spirit of God, however, have perceived the hand of God the Father in all of these things and have been filled with gratitude that they lived to see the day in which the promises had been fulfilled.

21.13.18—*east*—If one may generalize the words of Isaiah for a moment, one may easily perceive that there are three cardinal points articulated in his prophecy. The “north” may very well refer to the Lost Tribes of Israel, the “west” to the Americas, leaving the “east” to perhaps be identified with the Jews themselves ensconced in their own particular “Zion”. They are to be established and smitten no more. It is interesting to note that the phrases which articulate these blessings are absent from modern translations.

21.14 Zion as the ideal dwelling place is personified here by the Lord. She is filled with grief because her family is no more, there are none prepared to receive the Lord of Host when he comes to dwell within her gates. She deems herself a failure and thus not worthy to receive the blessings that had been promised her by the God of Heaven when her foundations were first laid.

21.14.3—*Zion*—Zion is the City of our God, wherein His children are of one heart and one mind, dwell in righteousness, and have no poor among them. Most recorded attempts at establishing Zion have apparently failed, the lands desolated, the inhabitants scattered. The founding of Zion in the hearts of the children of men constitutes a major step in the gathering of Israel and in the preparations for the Second

13 Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; for the feet of those who are in the east shall be established; and break forth into singing, O mountains; for they shall be smitten no more; for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

1 Ne. 21:13–16
CR99-O 90

14 But, behold, Zion hath said: The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me—but he will show that he hath not.

Coming of Jesus Christ and the Millennial reign.

21.14.17—*but*—The phrase that follows this word is missing from current translations of Isaiah. It is the practice of the Lord God of Israel to inspire hope in those who, in some measure, have not been successful in the mission assigned to them.

21.15 The allusion to a nursing mother is a powerful image, particularly significant to anyone who had nurtured an infant in this way. Having carried the child through pregnancy, suffering the labors of giving birth, and experiencing the natural joy in having brought new life into the world are indelibly engraved upon the mind and heart of the mother. The perfection of human memory is equated with motherhood. Such a woman could never forget her experiences. “Even if such forgetfulness were possible,” the Lord God declares, “my tenderness toward you is infinitely more enduring”.

21.15.34—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

21.16 It is intriguing that many scholars and commentators have assiduously avoided stating what is patently obvious here in this verse. Is not the moment of crucifixion depicted here? Are not these the sentiments of Jesus as he hung on the cross at Calvary facing the city walls of Jerusalem as he expired? His dying moment took place at the instant that the atoning sacrifice was complete, when he declared openly, “It is finished”. Could there be any moment in eternity more memorable and less forgettable than the one in which the salvation of the entire human race was guaranteed?

21.16.4—*graven*—Scholars have suggested that this was in reference to ancient practice by which men and women would identify themselves by tattooing the name of their home city in the palms of their hands. Others have drawn attention to the Jewish use of phylacteries. Still others point to the breastplate of Aaron where the names of the twelve tribes of Israel were etched upon the representative stones mounted there. While interesting, these theories are not particularly inspiring and are somewhat insipid by comparison to the truth of the matter.

21.17 Those who have been instrumental in desolating Zion will themselves be forced to flee the lands which they once usurped in their wickedness. The land will be cleansed and sanctified, prepared in every way for the establishment of the Celestial Zion upon the earth

21.17.6—*against*—This word is missing from most modern translations. Also notice the punctuation differences in the passage, particularly the semicolon after “destroyers” which turns the verse into a couplet.

21.18 Zion, personified as a woman stripped, abused, and abandoned, will be clothed as a virgin bride, spotless in every way, adorned with the graces of her children, the vast gathering of peoples redeemed through the blood of Christ

21.18.10—*these*—The vast multitudes that will be gathered from afar; the north, the west, the east, and from the lands of Sinim (see 21.12–13) These are they who have come forth from prison, who once dwelt in darkness (see 21.9), these are they from the isles of the sea (see 21.8).

21.18.46—*bride*—The Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, adds the words “her jewels”. While not part of the original text as recorded on the Brass Plates, it is completely consistent with the

15 For can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee, O house of Israel.

1 Ne. 21:15
EM 4:1579
1 Ne. 21:15–16
CR93-A 98

16 Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.

17 Thy children shall make haste against thy destroyers; and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.

{*¶*—1830}

18 Lift up thine eyes round about and behold; all these gather themselves together, and they shall come to thee. And as I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on even as a bride.

context of the simile.

21.19 The children of Zion had been scattered, her accoutrements seized by the wicked, her vast holdings no more than chattel in the hands of others. The villains who abused her would be themselves scattered and despoiled, the place vacated for her children. When the time came for her new children to enter into their inheritance, however, there would not be sufficient space for them. For all of the anticipated glory for which Zion may have prepared herself at some point, the resources needed for her inhabitants would far exceed her most sanguine expectations

21.19.15–16—*even now*—Notwithstanding the fact that the wicked had abandoned their claims upon the land and improvements, there was not sufficient to accommodate all who were pressing in at that time. There is in the phrase, however, an implication that there was to be a continually increasing population. If the preparations would not sustain those who were entering in, what would she do about those who were to follow?

21.20 The population of Zion will be greater than anything that had ever been proposed before. In the western hemisphere, the space required for the people of Zion will require the development of the entire land masses of North and South America. We may assume that something of that sort will eventually be necessary in the eastern hemisphere.

21.20.12—*first*—The King James version has “other” instead of “first”. The Brass Plates preserved the intent of Isaiah.

21.20.23—*strait*—A lovely word in the English language which means “narrow”.

21.21 The question is a legitimate one. Even at her greatest glory, the inhabitants, the covenant people of Zion, were few in number. How could she be the mother of this vast multitude? Who had raised them for her? Who would willingly give up their children that she might not be desolate?

21.22 This is somewhat reminiscent of the Allegory of the Olive Tree (see *JAC 4–5*), in which Zenos and Jacob attempted to explain how a people having once rejected the Christ could ever be established upon him again as their corner stone. In short, it is through the blessings having been extended to the Gentiles, which nations and peoples had mingled their seed with the covenant people through the scattering of Israel, thus becoming potential heirs themselves through their children. Thus, their willingness to carry Zion’s sons and daughters in their own arms and upon their own shoulders.

21.22.15—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

19 For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants; and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away.

20 The children whom thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the first, shall again in thine ears say: The place is too strait for me; give place to me that I may dwell.

21 Then shalt thou say in thine heart: Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? And who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where have they been?

22 Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be *carried upon their shoulders.

1 Ne. 21:20–21
EM 4:1580

1 Ne. 21:22
CR94-O 39
1 Ne. 21:22–23
MLM 214

* p. 56

21.22.20—*standard*—That is to say, an ensign or banner to which the hosts of the faithful would gather. It represents the covenants of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, all of the laws, principles, and ordinances revealed by God to His children upon the earth to facilitate their salvation and exaltation.

21.23 Even the great men and women of the earth will marvel at the glory of Zion and will wish to become part of that society, though that desire would require of them that they lay down their scepters and crowns, consecrating all that they possess in order to be of one heart and one mind with the saints of God. Thereby, they will literally banish poverty from among the faithful, their wealth having been dedicated to the building of Zion rather than their personal aggrandizement. Those who do so, will never regret the decision, nor will they suffer shame or embarrassment of any kind.

21.24 In Jacob’s commentary on this and the two following verses, he clearly states that they are in reference to those who do not believe, who reject again the opportunity to receive salvation at the hands of the servants of God (see 2 *NE-C 6.14–16*). Those who refuse to establish Zion will be summarily excused from doing so, from participating in the things of God, for a thousand years. Thus having dealt with the recalcitrant, the Lord will liberate those who were still held in thralldom by the wicked.

21.25 In Jacob’s citation of Isaiah 49:25, he adds the phrase “the Mighty God shall deliver his covenant people”. This is undoubtedly Jacob’s own aside as he was quoting the text. Nonetheless it illustrates that if the world will not willingly accept the demands of a just God, those who fight against Him will have to suffer the consequences. The works of God abound, and those who oppose or obstruct His labors will, for the sake of the righteous, be forcibly removed. Lucifer himself will be banished from the affairs of mortal men for those thousand years, and will have no power over the hearts and minds of the righteous forever.

21.26 The destruction of the wicked is mutually effected. They will destroy themselves, the spirit of God having been withdrawn from among them. There will be no moderation in their warfare and like the Jaredites, everyone will fall into the dust of death and the misery of hell. In the world of spirits where they will be imprisoned, the wicked will acknowledge their folly.

22.1 As it will be remembered, the main reason that Nephi had cited these particular chapters from Isaiah was to persuade Laman and Lemuel and other members of the family that there would be a Messiah, one who would be sent by God the Father to redeem His children (see 19.22–23). From the outset, Nephi’s older brothers had grave doubts about the prophecies that had been made by Jeremiah and their father, that the city of Jerusalem would be destroyed and the Jews carried off to Babylon in the same fashion that the northern Kingdom of Israel had been ravaged by the Assyrians. It would seem

23 And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their face towards the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

24 For shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captives delivered?

25 But thus saith the Lord, even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.

26 And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine; and all flesh shall know that I, the Lord, am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

{Chapter VII}
(Chapter 22)

{¶—1830}

1 AND now it came to pass that after I, Nephi, had read these things which were engraven upon the plates of brass, my brethren came unto me and said unto me: What meaneth these things which ye have read? Behold, are they to be understood according to things

1 Ne. 21:23
CR87-O 30

1 Ne. 22
EM 1:146
EM 2:701, 710
EM 3:1163,
1164, 1283
1 Ne. 22:1–4
AF 321

that the questions being raised were attempts to undermine Nephi's argument that these chapters should be interpreted literally. No doubt the brothers perceived them only as spiritual issues, to be interpreted metaphorically, rather than outward events of human history. Nephi's brothers were unwilling to accept the notion of a literal gathering of scattered Israel; so, therefore, they questioned the application of Isaiah chapter 49 to their special circumstances, now that they were half a world away from their homeland, a journey that had taken them a decade to complete.

22.1.10—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

22.2 The fact of the matter was that the writings of Isaiah could not be understood at all without the influence and direction of the Holy Ghost. In that sense, the prophecies were, indeed, spiritual in every way. But the words of the prophets are not one thing or the other, either of the spirit or of the flesh, they are spiritual insights into the temporal world in which we live. God and His servants are neither Platonists nor Aristotelians. Mortal experience only has meaning or value when the eternal implications of temporal life are understood clearly. That comprehension can only take place through the power of the spirit.

22.2.3—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

22.2.13—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

22.3 Nephi testified that all that had been seen in the immediate past with the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah were mere harbingers to that which would eventually befall them. The scattering would be as complete as disintegration of a death body, the elements of a corpse having been reduced to dust and blown into every quarter of the earth. Their having been guided to the land of their inheritance in the Americas was but one of a countless number of separations between Palestine and the covenant people.

22.3.25—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

22.4 The children of Abraham have been driven from place to place since the foundation of the covenant people was laid by God and His servant. Abraham's personal wanderings are archetypal of the destiny of the House of Israel as they have been buffeted by the world. Some of the scattering was accomplished by force, a violent disenfranchisement by the military and political powers of the earth. Other aspects of the scattering were divinely inspired, as implied by the saplings transplanted by the master of the vineyard in the Allegory of Zenos. Other features of the scattering were brought about by the will of those who scattered themselves out of fear or willfulness.

which are spiritual, which shall come to pass according to the spirit and not the flesh?

2 And I, Nephi, said unto them: Behold they were manifest unto the prophet by the voice of the Spirit; for by the Spirit are all things made known unto the prophets, which shall come upon the children of men according to the flesh.

3 Wherefore, the things of which I have read are things pertaining to things both temporal and spiritual; for it appears that the house of Israel, sooner or later, will be scattered upon all the face of the earth, and also among all nations.

4 And behold, there are many who are already lost from the knowledge of those who are at Jerusalem. Yea, the more part of all the tribes have been led away; and they are scattered to and fro upon the isles of the sea; and whither they are none of us knoweth, save that we know that they have been

1 Ne. 22:2
EM 3:1160

1 Ne. 22:3–5
AF 327
AGQ 2:56
MD 679
EM 2:702
1 Ne. 22:3–7
MLM 188
1 Ne. 22:3–12
EM 2:706
1 Ne. 22:3–25
MD 14
1 Ne. 22:3–5, 7–12
EM 2:709
1 Ne. 22:4
MD 455

<p>22.4.18—<i>Jerusalem</i>—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.</p>	<p>led away.</p>	
<p>22.5 One of the peculiar qualities of Isaiah’s technique in recording his prophecies is that they tend to fit every remnant and branch of Israel, in every time and place. Hence, he is able to look upon a single aspect of the scattering and extrapolate the total inevitability. He could holistically perceive a developing problem and surmise, through inspiration, the complete resolution or fulfillment of the word of the Lord in every case.</p>	<p>5 And since they have been led away, these things have been prophesied concerning them, and also concerning all those who shall hereafter be scattered and be confounded, because of the Holy One of Israel; for against him will they harden their hearts; wherefore, they shall be scattered among all nations *and shall be hated of all men.</p>	<p>1 Ne. 22:5 PM 168 * p. 57</p>
<p>22.5.8–9—<i>these things</i>—That is to say, the prophecies regarding the gathering of the House of Israel in the last days, specifically those who had been scattered before Isaiah composed his text. Needless to say, the prophecies would be applicable to those who were scattered after he committed his visions to parchment.</p> <p>22.5.34—<i>Israel</i>—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.</p>	<p>6 Nevertheless, after they shall be nursed by the Gentiles, and the Lord has lifted up his hand upon the Gentiles and set them up for a standard, and their children have been carried in their arms, and their daughters have been carried upon their shoulders, behold these things of which are spoken are temporal; for thus are the covenants of the Lord with our fathers; and it meaneth us in the days to come, and also all our brethren who are of the house of Israel.</p>	<p>1 Ne. 22:6 EM 2:700 1 Ne. 22:6–11 EM 2:541 EM 3:1013 1 Ne. 22:6–12 EM 2:702</p>
<p>22.6.9—<i>Gentiles</i>—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.</p>		
<p>22.6.86—<i>Israel</i>—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.</p>	<p>7 And it meaneth that the time cometh that after all the house of Israel have been scattered and confounded, that the Lord God will raise up a mighty nation among the Gentiles, yea, even upon the face of</p>	<p>1 Ne. 22:7 AF 321 1 Ne. 22:7–8 AF 327</p>
<p>22.7 Nephi now addresses the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecies with regard to the future history of his family that he himself had seen in vision. As interesting as the complete application might have been, Nephi was by far and away most concerned by those events which impinged upon the fate of his own children and that of the children of his brothers.</p> <p>22.7.14—<i>Israel</i>—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the</p>		

posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

22.7.28–29—*mighty nation*—It is difficult to imagine any other nation than the United States of America which is being referred to here. The children of Lehi, however, have been scattered by the Gentiles, or Europeans, from Northwest Territories to the Straits of Magellan, by the French, the English, the Spanish, the Portuguese, and others.

22.7.32—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

22.8 Carrying the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ into all of the world is a costly affair. From whence has a large percentage of that required wealth come from? How have the nations that pertain to Lehi’s posterity learned of their inheritance blessings? As the work of the Kingdom of God continues to grow, every nation under heaven will participate in the gathering and in the nurturing of the children of Israel in their scattered state. In some instances, the historical evidence in support of the initial fulfillments of these prophecies has been stunning and inspiring.

22.8.15–16—*marvelous work*—Certainly the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the restorations of the Priesthood, and the establishment of the true Church of Christ among the inhabitants of the earth, are all part of that of which would qualify as a marvelous work among the Gentiles. This work would be the means by which the posterity of Lehi would obtain salvation and exaltation. If the truth be known, it is this same marvelous work which will bless every nation under heaven, into which the children of Israel have been scattered.

22.8.19—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

22.9 Part of the worth unto the Gentiles will be their eventual awareness that they have been instrumental in helping to restore ancient blessings that had been taken from a lost and fallen people. The major portion of that blessing, however, will come as they realize that they, as Gentiles, have become natural heirs to the promises made to Abraham because at some point they allowed remnants of scattered Israel to settle within the borders of their land.

22.9.10—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries

this land; and by them shall our seed be scattered.

8 And after our seed is scattered the Lord God will proceed to do a marvelous work among the Gentiles, which shall be of great worth unto our seed; wherefore, it is likened unto their being nourished by the Gentiles and being carried in their arms and upon their shoulders.

1 Ne. 22:8
MLM 214
EM 2:700

9 And it shall also be of worth unto the Gentiles; and not only unto the Gentiles but unto all the house of Israel, unto the making known of the covenants of the Father of heaven unto Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

1 Ne. 22:9
PM 58
1 Ne. 22:9–12
MLM 215, 294

with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

22.9.23—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

22.9.37—*Abraham*—The undisputed “Father of the Faithful”. Modern biblical scholars are generally kind to Abraham as are most theologians in the sister religious of Judaism. The spiritual stature of Abraham is, for the most part, immeasurable by man. Abraham is one of the Lord God’s noblemen, whose faith and confidence in the divine word are equaled or excelled by few who have come into mortality upon this earth. Removing the Lord Jesus Christ from the list of candidates, however, would probably render our estimation of Abraham all but absolute. Abraham was one of three sons born to Terah during a millennium of poverty and famine. Through Abraham’s ministrations the promises made to the ancient fathers were preserved and re-established in earnest. In one of the most tender of moments recorded in secular or ecclesiastical history, the Lord God of Heaven instructed Abraham in the nature of the greatest gift that a loving God may bestow upon his creation when he asked for the sacrificed life of his son Isaac.

22.10 Nephi, in stating that the Lord would bare his arm before the nations, is quoting from Isaiah 52, a Messianic prophecy having to do with the restoration of the House of Israel through the preaching of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in every nation, among every kindred, tongue, and people. The gathering of Israel and the conversion of the Gentiles is not to be a pedestrian event, but one in which the power of God will intensify the effectiveness of the messengers of salvation.

22.11 The principles and ordinances of the Gospel will be delivered unto the inhabitants of the earth as the keys of the Church and Kingdom of God are wielded in behalf of the children of Israel, those who have been scattered into every corner of the earth.

22.11.26—*gospel*—That is to say, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance from sin, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.

22.11.35—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

22.12 As is illustrated in the Allegory of Zenos, the Lord God of Israel has in the past transplanted many of his covenant people into remote locations on the face of the earth. If Lehi’s family is any indication, in these instances of scattering there was also a blessing of a place of inheritance, that the new lands into which they were led would become a promise land for them. As the combined posterity of the remnants of Israel and the Gentiles developed, those children obtained a right to both blessings; the land of inheritance as a result of their Gentile fathers and the right to the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and

10 And I would, my brethren, that ye should know that all the kindreds of the earth cannot be blessed unless he shall make bare his arm in the eyes of the nations.

11 Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to make bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations, in bringing about his covenants and his gospel unto those who are of the house of Israel.

12 Wherefore, he will bring them again out of captivity, and they shall be gathered together to the lands of their inheritance; and they shall be brought out of obscurity and out of darkness; and they shall know that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer, the Mighty

1 Ne. 22:10–11
EM 2:700

1 Ne. 22:11–12
AF 333, 343
DS 3:9
MLM 200
1 Ne. 22:11–26
MLM 314

1 Ne. 22:12
PM 237
EM 2:481, 541,
706, 707
CR84-O 8
1 Ne. 22:12–22
MLM 560

Jacob by way of their Israelite fathers. Thus, with the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in these latter days, the population of every nation under heaven would contain those who would be naturally receptive to the light and truth that God the Father was sending into the world.

22.12.51—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

22.13 Nephi had beheld the fury of the great and abominable church as it consumed itself with wars and rumors of wars (see 14.13–17). In every nation there were those who pertained to the Church of the Lamb of God, who rejoiced in the fullness of the Gospel, who were filled with righteousness and the Spirit of truth. The promises that had been made unto the fathers, the ancient patriarchs who received the fullness of the Priesthood of God, would be fulfilled in part because of the protection that would be afforded the faithful in the midst of the tribulation poured out upon the nations, a protection that would preserve their souls from all harm, while the wicked were wasted away.

22.14 Nephi pointed out that one of the great travesties committed by the church of the devil was the deletion of plain and precious things from the record of the Jew (see 13.26–28), as effective a ploy as might be devised to destroy the unity of Zion, that place wherein the pure in heart dwell. One may only look at the religious factionalism in the world today, particularly among Christians, to begin to understand the extent to which this war has hindered the work of the righteous and blinded the eyes and minds of those who might otherwise have accepted the fullness of the Gospel once it was restored upon the earth. In the end, however, those who deliberately corrupted the writings of the prophets of God suffered and will suffer the consequences of their own perfidy, brought low into the dust through death and cast into that pit wherein the wicked welter in shame and anger.

22.14.9–12—*O house of Israel*—The oddity suggested by this phrase is created by the fact that Nephi is instructing his brethren, but apparently in this instance is addressing the house of Israel in the second person singular. In the following verse, Nephi clearly cites from one of the prophets as his source for the quote. It may very well be that his citation begins here and is from the writings of the same prophet.

22.14.22–25—*fall into the pit*—Both Isaiah and Jeremiah use this image of the pit into which the wicked are cast, yet in a different vein than what is suggested here. Is it not possible that both of these prophets were borrowing the image from an earlier prophet whose writings they both admired? In previous chapters, Nephi quoted heavily from the writings of Zenos as they were written on the Plates of Brass, frequently referring to him as the “prophet” (see 19.12–16 and 22.15).

22.14.41—*Zion*—Zion is the City of our God, wherein His children are of one heart and one mind, dwell in righteousness, and have no poor among them. Most recorded attempts at establishing Zion have apparently failed, the lands desolated, the inhabitants scattered. The founding of Zion in the hearts of the children of men constitutes a major step in the gathering of Israel and in the preparations for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the Millennial reign.

22.15 The gathering of Israel would precipitate a restoration of the covenant

One of Israel.

13 And the blood of that great and abominable church, which is the whore of all the earth, shall turn upon their own heads; for they shall war among themselves, and the sword of their own hands shall fall upon their own heads, and they shall be drunken with their own blood.

14 And every nation which shall war against thee, O house of Israel, shall be turned one against another, and they shall fall into the pit which they digged to ensnare the people of the Lord. And all that fight against Zion shall be destroyed, and that great whore, who hath perverted the right ways of the Lord, yea, that great and abominable church, shall tumble to the dust and great shall be the fall of it.

15 For behold, saith the prophet,

1 Ne. 22:13
EM 2:568
1 Ne. 22:13–14
MD 139

1 Ne. 22:14
EM 2:568

* p. 58

blessings promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob among their children who would be found among the nations of the earth. This gathering and restoration would be a harbinger, a preamble to the restoration of the earth to its paradisiacal glory, that the faithful and the honorable men of the earth might rest from the wars and calamities which have plagued the earth for six thousand years. During the Millennium Satan will have no power over the hearts of the children of men because they will not allow him to have that power. Their willing observance of the laws of God will protect them from his debilitating influence.

22.15.5—*prophet*—We are not told which of the prophets, of all those whose writings were inscribed upon the Brass Plates, Nephi is citing, but we may probably conclude that the quote began in the previous verse.

22.15.42—*stubble*—This image of the short stalks left in the ground after the harvest being burned in preparation for another planting is used frequently by the prophets of the Old Testament. No doubt other writers used the same metaphor when communicating the revelations to the children of Israel for whom they had responsibility.

22.16 While this prophecy clearly refers to the events prior to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory, yet it must have served as a fair warning to Laman and Lemuel that their murderous machinations would not be successful and that if they persisted, they themselves would be destroyed by the hand of God.

22.17 The glory of the Terrestrial Kingdom is far greater than the world in which we now live. With the advent of the Lord Jesus in glory, we may assume that the very nature of the earth will change, that this sphere being brought back into a paradisiacal state will effectively purge all those things which are of a lesser order. Therefore those who are not among those who qualify for the Terrestrial conditions that will exist during the Millennium will find themselves dispatched into another place where they may wait for a thousand years for the resurrection of their physical bodies. The preservation of the Terrestrial and Celestial righteous and the destruction of the Telestial wicked, therefore, are brought about by the same set of circumstances, as if by fire.

22.17.47—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

22.18 We may assume that blood and fire and vapors of smoke constitute some of the natural consequences of a relentless warring among the nations of the earth whereby the wicked are destroyed. Death and destruction are part and parcel of all war.

22.18.12–13—*shortly come*—Although the prophet spoke of the last days preparatory to the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, yet the prophecy would be fulfilled almost immediately in conjunction with the Babylonia Captivity from which Lehi and his family had just escaped. If our chronologies be correct, Nephi is instructing his brethren within a year of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the blood, fire, and vapors of smoke that accompanied that holocaust.

22.18.44—*flesh*—Remember that the brothers of Nephi had asked whether the teachings of Isaiah and the other prophets were to be

the time *cometh speedily that Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men; for the day soon cometh that all the proud and they who do wickedly shall be as stubble; and the day cometh that they must be burned.

16 For the time soon cometh that the fulness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all the children of men; for he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous.

17 Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire.

18 Behold, my brethren, I say unto you, that these things must shortly come; yea, even blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke must come; and it must needs be upon the face of this earth; and it cometh unto men according to the flesh if it so be that they will harden their hearts against the Holy One of Israel.

1 Ne. 22:15
MD 593
DNTC 3:109
MLM 669
1 Ne. 22:15–23
CR88-O 103

1 Ne. 22:16
EM 4:1598
1 Ne. 22:16–17
EM 2:738

1 Ne. 22:17
MLM 441
EM 2:568
CR92-O 56
1 Ne. 22:17–22
EM 2:706

fulfilled spiritually or physically.

22.18.60—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

22.19 Zion will be the institution of the Millennial reign, a system of laws and covenants which will govern mankind for a thousand years. Those who take umbrage with the establishment of this holy order will be relieved of any opportunity of participating in it.

22.19.20—*Zion*—Zion is the City of our God, wherein His children are of one heart and one mind, dwell in righteousness, and have no poor among them. Most recorded attempts at establishing Zion have apparently failed, the lands desolated, the inhabitants scattered. The founding of Zion in the hearts of the children of men constitutes a major step in the gathering of Israel and in the preparations for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the Millennial reign.

22.20 This is a synopsis of the teaching of Moses on this topic. The complete text is as follows:

The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him. (Deuteronomy 18:15–22)

There would be many who would rise up proclaiming themselves to be the Messiah. Israel had been counseled to ignore all those who did not merit the approbation of God, who did not speak by the power and influence of the spirit of God. The prophet being spoken of here, of course, is the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ during his mortal ministry. In the latter days, when the Lord returns to rule and reign for a thousand years upon the earth, those who will not accept his dominion will be cut off from among the people in a fatal way, not being prepared to dwell in a Terrestrial glory.

22.20.19—*Moses*—We have no idea how Amram and Jochebed referred to their son by name. This given by the princess, however, essentially is a reference to his deliverance from the Nile. In its elemental form, the name of the prophet means “is born”. The cognate in Hebrew means “drew him out”.

19 For behold, the righteous shall not perish; for the time surely must come that all they who fight against Zion shall be cut off.

20 And the Lord will surely prepare a way for his people, unto the fulfilling of the words of Moses, which he spake, saying: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that all those who will not hear that prophet shall be cut off from among the people.

1 Ne. 22:20
EM 1:378
1 Ne. 22:20–21
PM 444
EM 2:869

<p>22.20.25—<i>prophet</i>—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah. In this case, Jesus Christ is the prophet spoken of.</p>	<p>21 And now I, Nephi, declare unto you, that this prophet of whom Moses spake was the Holy One of Israel; wherefore, he shall execute judgment in righteousness.</p>	<p>1 Ne. 22:21 EM 3:1029</p>
<p>22.21 The Holy One of Israel is the Lord God Jehovah who, in his infant mortal state, was named Jesus of Nazareth, our Lord and our Savior. All judgment has been given into his hands by the Father. The power to deliver all men from the power of death and hell is also committed to his charge as the Messiah, the living Christ.</p>		
<p>22.21.4—<i>Nephi</i>—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.</p>		
<p>22.21.10—<i>prophet</i>—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah. In this case, Jesus Christ is the prophet spoken of.</p>		
<p>22.21.13—<i>Moses</i>—We have no idea how Amram and Jochebed referred to their son by name. This given by the princess, however, essentially is a reference to his deliverance from the Nile. In its elemental form, the name of the prophet means “is born”. The cognate in Hebrew means “drew him out”.</p>		
<p>22.21.20—<i>Israel</i>—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.</p>		
<p>22.22 Fear is the polar opposite of faith in Jesus Christ. Satan and his followers have no faith in Christ, and therefore have no hope for themselves, no expectations except for banishment from the presence of God and eternal misery at the hands of their own guilt and despair. Without faith in Christ, without hope for themselves, they are incapable of charity. Without charity, as Paul testified, they are nothing. Therefore the kingdom of the devil has been doomed from the beginning and was devised only to ensnare the unwary, as many as would hearken to the voice of him whose prospects were shattered eons ago by his own perversity and recalcitrance.</p>	<p>22 And the righteous need not fear, for they are those who shall not be confounded. But it is the kingdom of the devil, which shall be built up among the children of men, which kingdom is established among them which are in the flesh—</p>	<p>1 Ne. 22:22–23 AF 203 MD 420 MLM 67 1 Ne. 22:22,23 CR88-A 8</p>
<p>22.23 It is the disposition of the natural man to set aside those truths which he does not live and embrace those which he does. Therefore, every man possesses a degree of truth while in this life and to that same degree progresses towards eternal life. To the degree that he has rejected truth, to that same degree he has burdened himself with the detritus of this fallen world and is impaired in the divine journey that he was sent to the earth to pursue. The churches of the devil are the churches of the Self. Zion, those who are pure in heart, constitutes a community devoted to the edification of others.</p>	<p>23 For the time speedily shall come that all churches which are built up to get gain, and all those who are built up to get power over the flesh, and those who are built up to become popular in the eyes of the world, and those who seek the lusts of the flesh and the things of the world, and to do all manner of iniquity; yea, in fine, all those who belong to the kingdom of the devil are they who need fear, and tremble, and quake; they are those</p>	<p>1 Ne. 22:23 MD 139 DNTC 2:482 EM 2:568 1 Ne. 22:23–24 MLM 600 1 Ne. 22:23–26 EM 2:568</p>
<p>22.23.16—<i>gain</i>—The appeal of wealth is the appeal of excessive comfort, luxury, and carnal security. Possession, in the end, is ephemeral. The materials of this earth are in a state of constant decay and in order to maintain the illusion of possession, continual consumption is paramount.</p>		

22.23.26—*power*—The commandment in the beginning was to subdue the earth that it might be fruitful. This is a difficult process, one which requires the sweat of one’s brow to accomplish it. Some men have attempted to avoid the labor necessary to provide for oneself by enslaving their fellowmen. To compel one’s brother or sister to do tasks which would be better performed by oneself is to exercise unrighteous dominion. The tragedy is that the one who commands others to do his idle bidding stunts his own growth.

22.23.38—*popular*—The honors of men mean nothing when compared with the love of God the Father. Men with an inordinate desire to have the accolades of the world do so because they are unaware of that divine love which is sufficient for all men. They are inexperienced and display their ignorance of the relationship which they should have with heaven. The adulation of a fallen world is no more than ashes in the mouth and cannot satisfy the humble child of God.

22.23.50—*lusts*—After the Fall, men quickly became carnal, sensual, and devilish in their conduct toward one another. The gratification of the physical senses distracts the attention of the spirit away from the eternal prospects of man and hardens the heart and mind against the tender solicitations of the Father to return to the Celestial Kingdom filled with light and truth. Lust of any kind generally terminates in the misery of those around the lustful person.

22.23.66—*iniquity*—Iniquity is sin, knowing to do good and doing it not. Sometimes it is abject rebellion and not merely the absence of righteousness. Sin is an illusion. Men commit sin for a variety of reasons, but most sinners anticipate that they will be able to run contrary to the will of God and not have to pay the consequences of their actions. In this, of course, they are gravely mistaken.

22.23.118—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

22.24 Whenever the righteous dwell together in peace, the God of Heaven dwells with them. The fullness of that state is called the Millennial reign, but there have been other times in the history of the earth when these conditions have prevailed. For Nephi and those who would follow the counsel of the Lord, there would be an opportunity to be led away from the wilderness which Laman and Lemuel had created within the family.

22.24.14–17—*calves of the stall*—An ancient image used to depict the conditions that will exist during the Millennium, when the children of men will submit to the will of God rather than run rampant in a world filled with mortal danger.

22.24.23—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

22.25 While the wicked are consumed by the fires of their own wickedness, the saints of God are gathered into the sheepfold, the calves into their stalls, that they might be protected by the master of the flock, the keeper of the fold. While the kingdom of the devil disintegrates into ruin, the Kingdom of God is unified and cared for.

who must be brought low in the dust; they are those who must be consumed as stubble; and this is according to the words of the prophet.

24 And the time cometh speedily that the righteous must be led up as calves of the stall, and the Holy One *of Israel must reign in dominion, and might, and power, and great glory.

25 And he gathereth his children from the four quarters of the earth; and he numbereth his sheep, and they know him; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd; and he shall feed his sheep, and in him

1 Ne. 22:24
AF 373
EM 2:851
* p. 59
1 Ne. 22:24–25
PM 178
EM 2:705
1 Ne. 22:24–26
MLM 669

1 Ne. 22:25
AF 333, 343
MD 328
DNTC 1:488
CR86-O 70
CR87-O 30

<p>22.26 Satan is bound, has no power in the temporal world, when the children of men are unwilling to listen to his voice. A people beloved by the shepherd, protected and cared for, do not willingly stray from the devotion of the master. There is no rebellion in Zion.</p>	<p>they shall find pasture.</p>	<p>1 Ne. 22:26 AF 373 MD 496 DNTC 1:683 DNTC 3:571 MM 3:453 EM 1:381 EM 2:725, 739, 907 EM 4:1468 CR87-O 43 CR90-A 95 CR97-O 54</p>
<p>22.26.23–24—<i>many years</i>—Approximately one thousand years, the very definition of the Millennium.</p> <p>22.26.45—<i>Israel</i>—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.</p>	<p>26 And because of the righteousness of his people, Satan has no power; wherefore, he cannot be loosed for the space of many years; for he hath no power over the hearts of the people, for they dwell in righteousness, and the Holy One of Israel reigneth.</p>	
<p>22.27 Laman and Lemuel had questioned whether the fulfillment of the words of the prophets was spiritual or physical. They could not comprehend how these scatterings and gatherings could be physical, especially given their own experience in making their way to the Americas. Nephi assures them that a literal fulfillment would eventually come to pass, even though they could not imagine how it would transpire.</p>	<p>27 And now behold, I, Nephi, say unto you that all these things must come according to the flesh.</p>	
<p>22.27.5—<i>Nephi</i>—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.</p>		
<p>22.28 Nephi’s testimony to his brethren was that all the earth would have the opportunity to accept the principles and ordinances of salvation, and would be subject to exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom if they would so choose.</p>	<p>28 But, behold, all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people shall dwell safely in the Holy One of Israel if it so be that they will repent.</p>	<p>1 Ne. 22:28 AF 119</p>
<p>22.28.17—<i>Israel</i>—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.</p>		
<p>22.29 Nephi was constrained in his teachings to his brethren. Had the brothers been forthcoming in their obedience to the truth, Nephi undoubtedly would have been directed to further their education.</p>	<p>29 And now I, Nephi, make an end; for I durst not speak further as yet concerning these things.</p>	
<p>22.29.4—<i>Nephi</i>—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.</p>		
<p>22.29.10—<i>durst</i>—An archaic form of the verb “to dare”.</p>		
<p>22.30 The fundamental principle taught by the prophets of God is that man must be obedient to the laws of God if he ever wishes to be happy. Hence, the continual cry of the servants of the Lord to repent and walk uprightly in all things. The scriptures were given for our profit and learning, that we might be instructed in the nature of God and man.</p>	<p>30 Wherefore, my brethren, I would that ye should consider that the things which have been written upon the plates of brass are true; and they testify that a man must be obedient to the commandments of God.</p>	<p>1 Ne. 22:30 MD 103 1 Ne. 22:30–31 EM 1:145</p>
<p>22.31 Laman and Lemuel had frequently condemned the teachings of their Father and their younger brother as the foolishness of their hearts at best (see 17.20). Their flagrant accusations brought Nephi under condemnation for</p>	<p>31 Wherefore, ye need not suppose that I and my father are the only ones that have testified, and</p>	<p>1 Ne. 22:31 CR85-O 41 CR92-A 103</p>

wanting to usurp authority over his older brothers who felt it was their right to preside (see 16.37–38). The truth was that Nephi and Lehi only had Laman and Lemuel’s best interests at heart, a sentiment which they had great difficulty understanding. Nephi testified to them that if they would be obedient to the will of God they would know for themselves that Nephi and Lehi had been telling them the truth all along.

22.31.48—*Amen*—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

also taught them. Wherefore, if ye shall be obedient to the commandments, and endure to the end, ye shall be saved at the last day. And thus it is. Amen.

CR98-A 98
1 Ne. 30:10
EM 1:205

Alphabetized List of Specifically Noted Words and Phrases in 1 Nephi Commentary

- abominable*—13.6.12
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Abraham—22.9.37
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