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A Comprehensive Commentary of the Book of Jacob

Author(s): Paul Nolan Hyde

Published: Orem, UT; Parrish Press, 2015

Abstract: No abstract available.

A Comprehensive Commentary
of the
Book of Jacob

*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
Paul Nolan Hyde

Parrish Press
Orem, Utah

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Parrish Press, Orem, Utah
1842 South 50 East
Orem, Utah 84058

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
August 2015

Sequence of Specifically Noted Words and Phrases in the Jacob Commentary

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1.0.20— <i>man</i> | 1.13.18— <i>Lamanites</i> | 3.12.13— <i>Nephi</i> |
| 1.0.28— <i>Christ</i> | 1.13.19— <i>Lemuelites</i> | 3.12.18— <i>fornication</i> |
| 1.0.30–31— <i>few words</i> | 1.13.21— <i>Ishmaelites</i> | 3.12.20— <i>lasciviousness</i> |
| 1.0.39— <i>Nephi</i> | 1.14.3— <i>Jacob</i> | 3.13.16— <i>numerous</i> |
| 1.1.8–10— <i>fifty and five</i> | 1.14.17— <i>Lamanites</i> | 3.13.21–22— <i>these plates</i> |
| 1.1.19— <i>Lehi</i> | 1.14.25— <i>Nephi</i> | 3.13.32–33— <i>larger plates</i> |
| 1.1.21— <i>Jerusalem</i> | 1.14.36— <i>Nephites</i> | 3.13.36— <i>wars</i> |
| 1.1.22— <i>wherefore</i> | 1.15.11— <i>Nephi</i> | 3.13.39— <i>contentions</i> |
| 1.1.23— <i>Nephi</i> | 1.15.36— <i>David</i> | 3.14.1–2— <i>these plates</i> |
| 1.1.26— <i>Jacob</i> | 1.15.39— <i>desiring</i> | 3.14.8— <i>Jacob</i> |
| 1.2.5— <i>Jacob</i> | 1.15.41— <i>wives</i> | 3.14.17— <i>Nephi</i> |
| 1.2.48— <i>Nephi</i> | 1.15.43— <i>concubines</i> | 4.1.9— <i>Jacob</i> |
| 1.3.15–16— <i>other plates</i> | 1.15.46— <i>Solomon</i> | 4.2.31— <i>children</i> |
| 1.3.22–23— <i>these plates</i> | 1.17.3— <i>Jacob</i> | 4.2.36— <i>brethren</i> |
| 1.3.29–30— <i>my seed</i> | 1.17.15— <i>temple</i> | 4.2.47— <i>fathers</i> |
| 1.4.5— <i>preaching</i> | 1.17.20— <i>errand</i> | 4.4.8— <i>Christ</i> |
| 1.4.10— <i>revelation</i> | 1.18.3— <i>Jacob</i> | 4.5.5— <i>Christ</i> |
| 1.4.15— <i>prophesying</i> | 1.18.7— <i>Joseph</i> | 4.5.11–12— <i>his name</i> |
| 1.4.21— <i>heads</i> | 1.18.21— <i>Nephi</i> | 4.5.24— <i>pointing</i> |
| 1.4.38— <i>Christ's</i> | 2.1.4— <i>Jacob</i> | 4.5.31— <i>Moses</i> |
| 1.5.4— <i>faith</i> | 2.1.8— <i>Nephi</i> | 4.5.46— <i>Abraham</i> |
| 1.5.7— <i>anxiety</i> | 2.12.38–39— <i>this land</i> | 4.5.55— <i>Abraham</i> |
| 1.6.17— <i>Christ</i> | 2.13.44–45— <i>stiff necks</i> | 4.5.72— <i>Isaac</i> |
| 1.6.20— <i>kingdom</i> | 2.13.47–48— <i>high heads</i> | 4.6.5— <i>prophets</i> |
| 1.7.16— <i>Christ</i> | 2.19.9— <i>Christ</i> | 4.6.10— <i>revelations</i> |
| 1.7.49— <i>provocation</i> | 2.19.14— <i>if</i> | 4.6.13–15— <i>spirit of prophecy</i> |
| 1.7.59— <i>Israel</i> | 2.23.6— <i>burdens</i> | 4.6.40— <i>Jesus</i> |
| 1.8.27–29— <i>believe in Christ</i> | 2.23.30— <i>scriptures</i> | 4.6.45— <i>obey</i> |
| 1.8.31–33— <i>view his death</i> | 2.23.35— <i>excuse</i> | 4.7.18— <i>grace</i> |
| 1.8.35–37— <i>suffer his cross</i> | 2.23.39— <i>whoredoms</i> | 4.11.12— <i>Christ</i> |
| 1.8.39–41— <i>bear the shame</i> | 2.23.48— <i>David</i> | 4.11.21–22— <i>a resurrection</i> |
| 1.8.44— <i>Jacob</i> | 2.23.50— <i>Solomon</i> | 4.11.45— <i>faith</i> |
| 1.8.56— <i>Nephi</i> | 2.24.2— <i>David</i> | 4.12.20— <i>Christ</i> |
| 1.9.6— <i>old</i> | 2.24.4— <i>Solomon</i> | 4.14.4— <i>Jews</i> |
| 1.9.17— <i>anointed</i> | 2.25.17— <i>Jerusalem</i> | 4.14.41— <i>mark</i> |
| 1.9.37— <i>kings</i> | 2.25.41— <i>Joseph</i> | 4.14.81— <i>stumble</i> |
| 1.10.5— <i>Nephi</i> | 2.31.24— <i>Jerusalem</i> | 4.15.4— <i>Jacob</i> |
| 1.10.20— <i>Laban</i> | 2.32.30— <i>Jerusalem</i> | 4.15.32— <i>Jews</i> |
| 1.11.25— <i>Nephi</i> | 2.34.16— <i>Lehi</i> | 4.15.37— <i>stone</i> |
| 1.12.7— <i>Nephi</i> | 2.34.34–35— <i>these things</i> | 4.16.6— <i>scriptures</i> |
| 1.13.7— <i>Lamanites</i> | 2.35.9— <i>Lamanites</i> | 4.16.24— <i>Jews</i> |
| 1.13.9— <i>Nephites</i> | 3.1.4— <i>Jacob</i> | 5.1.10— <i>read</i> |
| 1.13.10— <i>nevertheless</i> | 3.1.47— <i>those</i> | 5.1.16— <i>Zenos</i> |
| 1.13.14— <i>Nephites</i> | 3.3.32— <i>Lamanites</i> | 5.1.24— <i>Israel</i> |
| 1.13.15— <i>Jacobites</i> | 3.4.4— <i>speedily</i> | 5.2.6— <i>Israel</i> |
| 1.13.16— <i>Josephites</i> | 3.5.3— <i>Lamanites</i> | 5.2.14— <i>prophet</i> |
| 1.13.17— <i>Zoramites</i> | 3.12.4— <i>Jacob</i> | 5.3.14— <i>Israel</i> |

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| 5.3.18–19— <i>tame olive tree</i> | 6.4.19— <i>branches</i> | 7.12.33–34— <i>Holy Ghost</i> |
| 5.4.28— <i>prune</i> | 6.8.14— <i>prophets</i> | 7.14.39— <i>devil</i> |
| 5.4.31— <i>dig</i> | 6.8.27— <i>Christ</i> | 7.14.72— <i>Christ</i> |
| 5.4.35— <i>nourish</i> | 6.9.23— <i>Christ</i> | 7.15.9— <i>Jacob</i> |
| 5.4.46— <i>branches</i> | 6.10.19–21— <i>lake of fire</i> | 7.15.25— <i>fell</i> |
| 5.7.71— <i>burned</i> | 6.10.23— <i>brimstone</i> | 7.15.37— <i>nourished</i> |
| 5.8.12— <i>many</i> | 6.13.27— <i>Amen</i> | 7.15.42–43— <i>many days</i> |
| 5.8.22— <i>graft</i> | 7.1.21— <i>Nephi</i> | 7.17.33— <i>Christ</i> |
| 5.11.7— <i>caused</i> | 7.1.25— <i>Sherem</i> | 7.19.23— <i>Christ</i> |
| 5.13.2— <i>these</i> | 7.2.24— <i>Christ</i> | 7.22.8— <i>Jacob</i> |
| 5.13.8— <i>nethermost</i> | 7.3.28— <i>Jacob</i> | 7.24.16— <i>Lamanites</i> |
| 5.13.20— <i>thee</i> | 7.3.32— <i>Christ</i> | 7.25.5— <i>Nephi</i> |
| 5.25.20— <i>good</i> | 7.6.21— <i>Brother</i> | 7.26.8— <i>Jacob</i> |
| 5.30.48— <i>cumber</i> | 7.6.22— <i>Jacob</i> | 7.26.23–24— <i>other plates</i> |
| 5.48.17— <i>loftiness</i> | 7.6.33— <i>you</i> | 7.26.26— <i>Nephi</i> |
| 5.72.15— <i>nights</i> | 7.6.42— <i>thou</i> | 7.26.79— <i>Jerusalem</i> |
| 5.75.47— <i>thou</i> | 7.6.49— <i>ye</i> | 7.27.3— <i>Jacob</i> |
| 5.75.75— <i>beginning</i> | 7.6.52— <i>gospel</i> | 7.27.20— <i>Enos</i> |
| 5.75.82— <i>ye</i> | 7.6.57— <i>Christ</i> | 7.27.22–23— <i>these plates</i> |
| 6.1.25— <i>prophet</i> | 7.7.24— <i>Moses</i> | 7.27.33— <i>Nephi</i> |
| 6.1.26— <i>Zenos</i> | 7.7.28–29— <i>right way</i> | 7.27.35— <i>commanded</i> |
| 6.1.32— <i>Israel</i> | 7.7.55— <i>Sherem</i> | 7.27.59— <i>small</i> |
| 6.3.5— <i>they</i> | 7.7.62— <i>blasphemy</i> | 7.27.77— <i>Brethren</i> |
| 6.3.29— <i>world</i> | 7.7.66— <i>knoweth</i> | 7.27.78— <i>adieu</i> |
| 6.4.15— <i>Israel</i> | 7.9.9— <i>Christ</i> | |
| 6.4.17— <i>roots</i> | 7.11.17— <i>Christ</i> | |

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

The Book of Jacob

0.0 Jacob was the fifth son of Lehi and Sariah, born in the wilderness of affliction, and raised during a time of great hardship for the entire family. Inasmuch as he was faithful in his role as a disciple of Christ, he was frequently an object of persecution and ridicule on the part of his older brothers, Laman, and Lemuel, and those who were of their party. His understanding of the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ is almost without parallel, save for those disciples who labored with the Savior during his mortal ministry in the land of Palestine. The third-person headnote of the Book of Jacob is typical of Nephite writing style in general and we probably ought to assume that Jacob himself wrote the summary as did Nephi and other first-person authors. Mormon's approach was to provide headnotes at the beginning of each major division of his narrative. With the loss of the 166 pages of manuscript by the Prophet Joseph Smith's scribe, Martin Harris, the entire book of Lehi and the beginning of the book of Mosiah was lost, including, of course, the headnote that pertained to the book of Mosiah.

1.0.20—*man*—The fellow here is Sherem, an anti-Christ who appears in chapter 7.

1.0.28—*Christ*—Simply put, the name "Christ" is the Greek translation of the Hebrew "Messiah". In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean "anointed one". Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

1.0.30–31—*few words*—As will be seen, the commandment to Jacob regarding the Small Plates of Nephi was that little of the history of the people was to be preserved here, but rather those things which would be of most value to their posterity. No doubt a detailed account of the Nephite nation was incised upon the Large Plates of Nephi.

1.0.39—*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.

*THE BOOK OF JACOB

THE BROTHER OF NEPHI

The words of his preaching unto his brethren. He confoundeth a man who seeketh to overthrow the doctrine of Christ. A few words concerning the history of the people of Nephi.

* p. 123

Jacob

EM 1:147, 196,
198, 212, 213

EM 2:714, 855

EM 4:1782,
1804

{Chapter I}
(Chapter 1)

{9—1830}

1.1 The Small Plates of Nephi, unlike the Large Plates, was an intimate record that was to stay in the immediate family of the prophet. Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Omni, Amaron, Chemish, Abinadom, and Amaleki all wrote in turn upon the Small Plates, doing their best to follow the original charge given by the Lord to Nephi. In the days of Amaleki, the Small Plates were placed in the records depository maintained by King Benjamin. Eventually all of the Nephite records would come under the purview of the prophet Mormon who found the Small Plates so compelling that he physically attached them to his own account of the Nephites. A translation of the Small Plates was commanded by the Lord in order to replace that portion of Mormon's narrative that had been lost through the negligence of Martin Harris. The text of the current edition of the Book of Mormon from 1 Nephi to the Words of Mormon constitutes that translation.

- 1.1.8–10—*fifty and five*—Assuming that Lehi left Jerusalem six hundred years before the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, the year would have been approximately 545 BC.
- 1.1.19—*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.
- 1.1.21—*Jerusalem*—A city located about 32 miles from the Mediterranean Sea and 18 miles from the Jordan River and the northern tip of the Dead Sea. Once the city was captured by the children of Israel from the Jebusites, it served as the capital of the kingdom of Israel and Judah for many centuries. Jerusalem sits aside of several prominences including mount Moriah, where Abraham was commanded to take Isaac as an offering unto the Most High God, and mount Zion. The Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives lie immediately to the east. The traditional sites of Calvary and the Garden Tomb lie immediately to the north. The king at the time of the initial entry into the land of promise was Adonizedek.
- 1.1.22—*wherefore*—The marker for the conclusion of a syllogism. In other words, since fifty-five years had past away, Nephi was probably more than seventy years of age at the time he gave his instructions to his brother Jacob. Jacob would probably have been in his late forties or early fifties. Nephi gave his instructions because he undoubtedly felt that death for him was not far off.
- 1.1.23—*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.
- 1.1.26—*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.

1 FOR behold, it came to pass that fifty and five years had passed away from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem; wherefore, Nephi gave me, Jacob, a commandment concerning the small plates, upon which these things are engraven.

Jacob 1:1
EM 1:170
Jacob 1:1–4
AF 263
MD 326
Jacob 1:1–4, 18
EM 3:1004

1.2 When one considers the great sermon given at the Temple in the land of Nephi, coupled with his presentation and commentary on the Allegory of Zenos, and concluding with his powerful rebuke of the anti-Christ, Sherem, one may fully appreciate the degree to which Jacob hearkened to the voice of his brother.

1.2.5—*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.

1.2.48—*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.

1.3 Nephi must have known the nature of the posterity of Jacob and how their obedience would preserve those precious plates which the Lord had instructed him to devise for the more sacred teachings among the people. He had undoubtedly seen both his own children and that of his brother in vision and knew, despite any pride that he might have had in his personal family, the charge would be better kept by another segment of the family. Nephi’s obedience to the word of the Lord in this matter constitutes another example of his deep humility.

1.3.15–16—*other plates*—That is to say, the Large Plates of Nephi

1.3.22–23—*these plates*—That is to say, the Small Plates of Nephi.

1.3.29–30—*my seed*—It is interesting that Nephi committed the charge of the Small Plates, the most spiritual record to be kept by the Nephites, into the hands of the posterity of his bother, rather than his own children.

1.4 Nephi commanded Jacob to recount those things which constituted sacred preaching, revelation, and prophesying. Jacob chooses to give an example of each.

1.4.5—*preaching*—Certainly the sermon at the Temple in the land of Nephi qualifies as sacred preaching.

1.4.10—*revelation*—We may look at the presentation and explanation of the Allegory of Zenos as a purposeful revelation to the posterity of Lehi regarding the restoration of the House of Israel to a fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1.4.15—*prophesying*—Inasmuch as “prophesying” has to do with the testimony of Jesus Christ, Jacob’s exchange with Sherum serves as an example of that aspect of Jacob’s ministry. We can clearly see here that Jacob undoubtedly wrote this part of the Book of Mormon, his entry on the Small Plates all at the same time, probably near the end of his own life.

1.4.21—*heads*—That is to say, a summary of all that had been taught on the subject. Thus what we have of the sermon at the Temple, the Allegory of Zenos, and the encounter with Sherum are mere synopses of the original events.

1.4.38—*Christ’s*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who

2 And he gave me, Jacob, a commandment that I should write upon these plates a few of the things which I considered to be most precious; that I should not touch, save it were lightly, concerning the history of this people which are called the people of Nephi.

3 For he said that the history of his people should be engraven upon his other plates, and that I should preserve these plates and hand them down unto my seed, from generation to generation.

4 And if there were preaching which was sacred, or revelation which was great, or prophesying, that I should engraven the heads of them upon these plates, and touch upon them as much as it were possible, for Christ’s sake, and for the sake of our people.

Jacob 1:2
EM 2:589, 714
Jacob 1:2–3
EM 1:199
Jacob 1:2–4
EM 1:148, 199
CR86-A 75
Jacob:1:2,4
CR99-O 90

Jacob 1:3
CR86-O 5

Jacob 1:4
EM 1:145

has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

1.5 Nephi and Jacob both had received great revelations regarding the future of their people and as a result did all within their power to preserve them against the impending destruction and to provide a document which could be instrumental in restoring their eventual posterity to a knowledge of their faithful forbearers and the covenants which they had taken upon themselves.

1.5.4—*faith*—After having read any of the teachings of either Nephi or Jacob could anyone doubt their explicit faith in the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ?

1.5.7—*anxiety*—Nephi and Jacob trembled for their children and their children’s children unto the latest generation.

1.6 Nephi and Jacob’s revelations and visions did not merely extend to the time of the Savior’s mortal ministry, but their views extended into the latter days, to the time just prior to the Second Coming of Christ, and from thence into the Millennium and to the exaltation of the earth and the inhabitants thereof.

1.6.17—*Christ*—Both Nephi and Jacob had been privy to the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ to his mother, Mary, in Bethlehem of Judea.

1.6.20—*kingdom*—While one might point to the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Meridian of Time as the Kingdom spoken of here, the application of the term is far more expansive and relates directly to the political Kingdom of God that will be established after the coming of the Savior in glory.

1.7 Moses had led the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt in order that they might be prepared to come into the presence of God and there enjoy His companionship as did the citizens of the cities of Enoch and Melchizedek. His was an attempt to establish Zion among the covenant people. That ever has been the desire of the servants of God. Isolated as the Nephites were in the mountains of the promised land, a closely related extended family, their spiritual leaders had every expectation that if a Zion people might be established it should be possible among their relatives who had joined them in exile. This would not truly be achieved until after the visit of the Lord Jesus to the Nephites shortly after his resurrection from the dead.

1.7.16—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who

5 For because of faith and great anxiety, it truly had been made manifest unto us concerning our people, what things should happen unto them.

6 And we also had many revelations, and the spirit of much prophecy; wherefore, we knew of Christ and his kingdom, which should come.

7 Wherefore we labored diligently among our people, that we might persuade them to come unto Christ, and partake of the goodness of God, that they might enter into his rest, lest by any means he should swear in his wrath they should not enter in, as in the provocation in the days of temptation while the children of Israel were in the wilderness.

Jacob 1:6
PM 77

Jacob 1:7
EM 1:147
EM 2:705, 714
CR96-A 47
CR00-O 21

has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

1.7.49—*provocation*—The provocation in the wilderness took place as the children of Israel encamped at the foot of Mount Sinai. They utterly refused to prepare themselves sufficiently to receive the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ together with the power and blessings of the Melchizedek Priesthood. Instead they settled for the Mosaic Law and the governance of the Aaronic or Levitical Priesthood. Much of what we read in the book of Exodus and elsewhere demonstrates the open-eyed rebellion of a people who should have known better than to irritate their God.

1.7.59—*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.

1.8 Because Nephi and Jacob understood the consequences of sin, they could not bear that any of their posterity be brought to ruination through personal or societal rebellion. They had the witness of the scriptures of the consequences of willful transgression. They had witnessed the tragic effects in the lives of their own brethren, Laman and Lemuel, and those who took their part.

1.8.27–29—*believe in Christ*—That is to say, to have an active acceptance of the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, in anticipation of resurrection from the dead and a remission of all sin.

1.8.31–33—*view his death*—Do we not view the death of Christ as we enter into the waters of baptism, symbolizing the death, burial, and resurrection of the Savior, his victory over the grave? Do we not perceive his death in the emblems of the sacrament, the broken bread and the water? Do we not also perceive our own redemption in the same?

1.8.35–37—*suffer his cross*—The cross of Jesus Christ symbolizes the efforts of the world to distract the Lord of Life from his divinely appointed task to bring immortality and eternal life to all of the children of God who would accept them. Once we have taken upon ourselves the name of Christ with a commitment to remember him always and to keep his commandments, can we not expect to be presented with distractions of every kind, attempting to discourage us from accomplishing the things which have been given to us to do while we are here upon the earth?

1.8.39–41—*bear the shame*—Mockery and vilification began in the Garden of Eden and has continued unabated since as the natural man succumbs to the temptations of the adversary. This is one of Lucifer's

8 Wherefore, we would to God that we could persuade all men not to rebel against God, to provoke him to anger, but that all men would believe in Christ, and view his death, and suffer his cross and bear the shame of the world; wherefore, I, Jacob, take it upon me to fulfil the commandment of my brother Nephi.

Jacob 1:8
MD 173
PM 526
EM 1:345

most effective tools to dissuade the children of God from doing their duty and proving themselves worthy of the blessings that have been extended to them. Satan depreciates all who will listen to him; the Father and the Son speak words of peace and encouragement at all times.

1.8.44—*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.

1.8.56—*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.

1.9 Nephi had not desired to be a king and, much like Mosiah the son of King Benjamin, would have preferred another sort of administration. Nephi did for his people what he could, however, and anointed kings that followed in his stead. We do not know for certain the exact relationship between Nephi and his successor, although we may assume that he was kin of some kind given the roots of the society as a whole.

1.9.6—*old*—When the chapter began, Nephi was apparently in his early seventies (see 1.1.22). We do not know how much time has passed during the intervening eight verses.

1.9.17—*anointed*—We ought to assume that this was a literal act like unto the anointings that took place anciently in the Kingdom of Israel. Both kings and priests were anointed with consecrated olive oil as they embarked on their stewardships.

1.9.37—*kings*—We are not told whether this pattern to which Jacob is referring was one that had been established among the Nephites or whether the Nephites were following a pattern described in the Brass Plates. An argument could easily be made for either.

1.10 Regardless of the titles which his people had bestowed upon him, Nephi persistently saw himself as a servant, a protector, and a teacher of those who took upon themselves his name. In this sense, he served as an archetype for the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, even Jesus Christ.

1.10.5—*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.

1.10.20—*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.

1.11 Again, we cannot be certain of Jacob’s perspective here. Is he reporting solely on the attitude of the people of Nephi, that they proposed that every succeeding king would bear the name of Nephi? Or is he testifying after the fact that in the process of time, from the death of Nephi until the time that he

{*¶*—1830}

9 *Now Nephi began to be old, and he saw that he must soon die; wherefore, he anointed a man to be a king and a ruler over his people now, according to the reigns of the kings.

10 The people having loved Nephi exceedingly, he having been a great protector for them, having wielded the sword of Laban in their defence, and having labored in all his days for their welfare—

11 Wherefore, the people were desirous to retain in remembrance his name. And whoso should reign in his stead were called by the

* p. 124
Jacob 1:9–11
EM 1:169, 191

Jacob 1:10
EM 3:1427
CR86-A 36

Jacob 1:11
EM 2:804
EM 3:1004

was writing his portion of the Small Plates, that the Nephites had anointed at least two other men after Nephi to be their kings. Knowing this would undoubtedly help us understand the questions raised in 1.9.37.

1.11.25—*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.

1.12 How long did Nephi live after the anointing of the new king? We cannot tell precisely from Jacob’s narrative. King Benjamin, the great prophet king, lived for three years after his son, Mosiah, took responsibility for the nation. King Mosiah himself, the last of the kings of the land of Zarahemla, lived for approximately a year after the establishment of the rule of the judges. These, of course, have little bearing on the time involved, but it would seem that part of the pattern established among those who served as kings of the Nephite people is that they took the responsibility to choose their successor and anointed them prior to their own departure from mortality.

1.12.7—*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.

1.13 The point that Jacob is apparently making here is that when the Nephites departed into the wilderness to establish themselves in the mountains of Nephi, the division was more along theological and social lines as it was along genetic lines. In other words, some members of the immediate families of Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael may have chosen to go with Nephi into exile and thus became Nephites. By the same token, there may have been members of the immediate families of Nephi, Jacob, Joseph, and Zoram who chose to remain behind and thus became Lamanites.

1.13.7—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

1.13.9—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

1.13.10—*nevertheless*—That is to say, even though the division between the Lamanites and Nephites had been made along nongenealogical lines, the respective parties still acknowledged their parental affiliation regardless as to which camp they pertained. Because of the obvious confusion that Jacob anticipated in the minds of his readers, he decided to define “Nephites” as those who were generally speaking faithful to their covenants, and “Lamanites” as those who were not. Thus, during the history of the two people many Nephites became Lamanites and vice versa.

1.13.14—*Nephites*—A direct reference to the posterity of Nephi, the fourth son of Lehi.

1.13.15—*Jacobites*—A direct reference to the posterity of Jacob, the fifth son of Lehi.

1.13.16—*Josephites*—A direct reference to the posterity of Joseph, the sixth

people, second Nephi, third Nephi, and so forth, according to the reigns of the kings; and thus they were called by the people, let them be of whatever name they would.

{¶—1830}

12 And it came to pass that Nephi died.

13 Now the people which were not Lamanites were Nephites; nevertheless, they were called Nephites, Jacobites, Josephites, Zoramites, Lamanites, Lemuelites, and Ishmaelites.

Jacob 1:13
EM 1:160, 191,
192, 193
Jacob 1:13–14
MD 389, 391,
395, 439, 528,
856
EM 1:191, 193,
201, 804

son of Lehi.

- 1.13.17—*Zoramites*—The direct posterity of Zoram, the servant of Laban who joined Lehi’s family in the wilderness.
- 1.13.18—*Lamanites*—A direct reference to the posterity of Laman, the eldest son of Lehi.
- 1.13.19—*Lemuelites*—A direct reference to the posterity of Lemuel, the second son of Lehi.
- 1.13.21—*Ishmaelites*—The direct posterity of Ishmael, the father of the family who joined Lehi’s family in the wilderness.

1.14 A similar division took place shortly after the death of Solomon the King of Israel. The northern ten tribes broke away, forming a kingdom that retained the original name; the southern two tribes regrouped under the moniker, the Kingdom of Judah. It was in this political sense that the citizens of the northern kingdom could be called “Israelites” and the denizens of the southern kingdom could be called “Jews” regardless of their tribal affiliation. Jacob’s convention in his writings apparently became generalized over the next several hundred years. This certainly is the nominal and semantic difference that Mormon employs throughout his narrative.

- 1.14.3—*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.
- 1.14.17—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.
- 1.14.25—*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.
- 1.14.36—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

1.15 We are not privy to the process by which the Nephites began to fall into such egregious sin. One wonders at the possibilities, however. If we take in point the conduct of King Noah, the son of a fairly decent man, we observe an immediate decline in the general spirituality of the people living in the land of Nephi. The corruption of that reign would be followed by the righteous administration of Noah’s son Limhi, to which the people responded rather well in their desires to be good. Watching patterns such as these throughout the Book of Mormon and in the Old Testament, we may conclude that in many instances the people thought to excuse themselves in their wickedness because of the terrible example set by those who ruled them. Jacob does not expressly tell us of the attitude of the second King Nephi, but one wonders at his citing David and Solomon as examples of the transgression.

- 1.15.11—*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-

14 But I, Jacob, shall not hereafter distinguish them by these names, but I shall call them Lamanites that seek to destroy the people of Nephi, and those who are friendly to Nephi I shall call Nephites, or the people of Nephi, according to the reigns of the kings.

{*¶*—1830}

15 And now it came to pass that the people of Nephi, under the reign of the second king, began to grow hard in their hearts, and indulge themselves somewhat in wicked practices, such as like unto David of old desiring many wives and concubines, and also Solomon, his son.

Jacob 1:15
CR80-O 7

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

- 1.15.36—*David*—While we cannot in any fashion condemn David for the wives that he took under his wing with the guidance and approval of the prophet Nathan, yet the king lost his eternal salvation, his exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom, because of the affair with Bathsheba and the proposed assassination of Uriah.
- 1.15.39—*desiring*—Some scholars have suggested that the “desire” was working within the hearts and minds of the people, but had not yet manifested itself in conduct. One must ask, then, what it was about their circumstances that brought these desires to the forefront? Should we not suspect that something rather overt had happened within the community that was breaking the hearts of their tender wives and were losing the confidence of their children? (see 2.35)
- 1.15.41—*wives*—The default marriage arrangement is for one man to have but one wife. There have been times, as Jacob will explain to the Nephites, when the Lord has commanded His people to have more than one wife, but that was not to be the case among the Nephites.
- 1.15.43—*concubines*—Simply put, these were second-class wives, women who held a lower social standing than the wives, generally because of their status in their communities. These women and their children generally had no material claim on the assets of their husband once he was dead; there would be no formal inheritance like that which would be expected by the wife and her children. Some scholars have suggested that this arrangement was hardly more than a gathering of mistresses and “kept” women. While this has been the case in more “enlightened” cultures, men defrauding women of all that is precious in this world, it was not true anciently.
- 1.15.46—*Solomon*—Solomon’s sin was in perceiving marriage in his day as a political expedience. Therefore, of his one thousand wives, three hundred were given the more lofty status as wives; the other seven hundred were concubines. Almost all of these marriages were designed to hold a vassal state in political check. This practice, of course, debased the institution of marriage in the eyes of the people, a sentiment which continued almost unabated to the days of the mortal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1.16 The debilitating aspect of unrestrained acquisitiveness is pride as it is manifested as social stratification. One must needs ask one’s self as to the total population of the land of Nephi at the time Jacob addressed his concerns. During the fifty or so years that Nephi and his associates had been ensconced in the mountains of Nephi, how many children and grandchildren had been born to them? Was Jacob going to address hundreds of people or thousands of people? Social stratification in a close family unit seems almost unthinkable given Nephi’s leadership, but clearly there were some among the rising generation who had not quite gotten the picture of an ideal family, the Zion for the which both Nephi and Jacob had worked (see 1.7–8). One wonders at the abundance of silver and gold and why it was that such commodities had the power to produce avarice. It seems as unreasonable as using leaves for currency.

1.17 Jacob’s discourse to the people of Nephi regarding pride and immorality will be comprised of all of chapter 2 and most of chapter 3.

- 1.17.3—*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,

16 Yea, and they also began to search much gold and silver, and began to be lifted up somewhat in pride.

17 Wherefore I, Jacob, gave unto them these words as I taught them in the temple, having first obtained mine errand from the Lord.

Jacob 1:17
AF 487
MD 780
DS 2:237

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| <p>we 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.</p> | | <p>CR97-O 8 Jacob 1:17–19 CR90-A 56</p> |
| <p>1.17.15—<i>temple</i>—The temple had been built by Nephi and his people shortly after they had established themselves in the land of Nephi (see <i>2 NE-C 5.16</i>).</p> <p>1.17.20—<i>errand</i>—Jacob did all that he did as the result of divine revelation. This was in concert with his ordination to the priesthood and his specific calling to minister to the people.</p> | | |
| <p>1.18 The ordinances of the Aaronic priesthood were performed under the auspices of the Melchizedek Priesthood which both Jacob and Joseph held. They functioned as priests, attending to the sacrificial altars of the Temple. They also had the charge to teach the principles of salvation as articulated in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.</p> | <p>18 For I, Jacob, and my brother Joseph had been consecrated priests and teachers of this people, by the hand of Nephi.</p> | <p>Jacob 1:18 EM 2:713 Jacob 1:18–19 CR87-A 60 CR00-O 95</p> |
| <p>1.18.3—<i>Jacob</i>—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 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.</p> | | |
| <p>1.18.7—<i>Joseph</i>—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.</p> | | |
| <p>1.18.21—<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>1.19 Jacob and Joseph saw themselves accountable for the conduct of the people, even if the reigning king at the time did not. They could not blithely watch their brethren go down to destruction simply because certain prominent members of their society had chosen to violate the commandments of God. They have had reason to fear for their lives, given the subjects that Jacob had been commanded to address. Many of the people were growing hard in their hearts, beginning to seriously contemplate gross debaucheries pleasing to the carnal mind.</p> | <p>19 And we did magnify our office unto the Lord, taking upon us the responsibility, answering the sins of the people upon our own heads if we did not teach them the word of God with all diligence; wherefore, by laboring with our might their blood might not come upon our garments; otherwise their blood would come upon our garments, and we would not be found spotless at the last day.</p> | <p>Jacob 1:19 MD 304 DNTC 2:163 MF (11) EM 1:13 EM 2:655, 850 EM 3:1019 CR83-O 48 CR85-O 57 CR86-A 54 CR89-A 61 CR96-O 16 CR99-A 6</p> |
| | <p><i>{Chapter II}</i> (Chapter 2)</p> <p><i>{¶—1830}</i></p> | |
| <p>2.1 The death of Nephi took place sometime after the year 544 BC (see 1.1) at which time he was undoubtedly at least seventy years of age. The next temporal marker in the Small Plates of Nephi does not appear until Enos, the son</p> | <p>1 THE words which Jacob, the brother of Nephi, spake unto the people of Nephi, after the death of</p> | <p>Jacob 2 EM 1:147 EM 3:1164</p> |

of Jacob, declares that 179 years had passed away since the departure of Lehi from the city of Jerusalem (see *EN-C 1.25*). That would correspond to about 421 BC, a date near the end of Enos' own life. Assuming Nephi lived to a hundred years old, which is highly unlikely, then his death would have been about 514 BC. It is probable that he passed away around the year 540 BC (see 1.9).

2.1.4—*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 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.

2.1.8—*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.

2.2 Jacob was not merely addressing the members of his family, an old "uncle" remonstrating with the Nephites. He was responding directly to revelations which he had received from the Lord God of Israel, that the Nephite people were in dire straits. However affable he may have been as a person, however charismatic he may have been in his daily walk and talk as a member for the community, his commission at that moment was to call those whom he loved deeply to repentance, and that in a powerful and clear fashion.

2.3 The sentiments expressed by Jacob are similar to those expressed by Lehi and Nephi regarding Laman and Lemuel and those who took their side. The anxiety which they felt for and in behalf of their posterity, generation after generation, prompted them to do all that they could to provide for a way for their children to be preserved against the great tragedies which lay in store for them. Jacob could clearly see where the desires and weaknesses of the Nephites were going to take them. Their pride was for him a harbinger of dissolution and apostasy; their mental and emotional carnality a marker for their impending decline into depravity and corruption.

2.4 As a man thinks in his heart so will he become. By the power of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of revelation, Jacob knew that materialism, social stratification, and moral degeneracy were beginning to have an appeal to a segment of his people, of his family. Outwardly they had the appearance of saints, but within they were beginning to rot away.

2.5 Although he has not as yet addressed the specific sin which was beginning to make inroads into their hearts and minds, yet it is clear that he cannot bear to think of the consequences of the path upon which they are wending their way. Pride and immorality are the two major destructive forces which were about to be unleashed among the Nephites. Although there is much to be abhorred about social stratification due to material wealth, it is undoubtedly the lust for multiple spouses and concubines that is causing Jacob's primary distress.

2.6 What would make Jacob shrink with shame? In part it was because these people were members of his extended family, children of his own family and

Nephi:

2 Now, my be*loved brethren, I, Jacob, according to the responsibility which I am under to God, to magnify mine office with soberness, and that I might rid my garments of your sins, I come up into the temple this day that I might declare unto you the word of God.

3 And ye yourselves know that I have hitherto been diligent in the office of my calling; but I this day am weighed down with much more desire and anxiety for the welfare of your souls than I have hitherto been.

4 For behold, as yet, ye have been obedient unto the word of the Lord, which I have given unto you.

5 But behold, hearken ye unto me, and know that by the help of the all-powerful Creator of heaven and earth I can tell you concerning your thoughts, how that ye are beginning to labor in sin, which sin appeareth very abominable unto me, yea, and abominable unto God.

6 Yea, it grieveth my soul and causeth me to shrink with shame

EM 4:1579
CR98-O 102
Jacob 2:1-13
CR94-A 27

* p. 125
Jacob 2:2
MD 304, 780
DNTC 2:163
DS 2:237
EM 2:850
CR89-A 11
CR89-A 61
Jacob 2:2-11
AF 487
Jacob 2:3
CR86-A 36
CR87-A 87
EM 2:714
Jacob 2:3,7
CR94-A 27

Jacob 2:5
MD 777, 791
DNTC 1:179
FPM 142

the children of his brothers and sisters who were falling into grave error. Additionally, this was happening during his watch, while he was serving as the moral leader of the community. These were delicate issues that he was having to bring to their attention, matters that would prove to be embarrassing to those indulging in their less than virtuous thinking, and distressing to the innocent who had no idea that such perversions were in their midst.

2.7 Jacob could not mince words with the proud and the lustful; he had to speak with no uncertain terms. In the process he would be compelled to reveal precisely what had been going on behind the backs of their wives and their children. Thus exposed, they would be forced to make reconciliation with those whom they had secretly offended; they would be compelled to mend fences that had been damaged by their own viciousness. How distressing it is for a faithful spouse to discover that her companion has been unfaithful, if only in his mind! Jacob knew that he would undoubtedly incur the anger of the exposed sinners and deeply affect the hearts and minds of the innocent.

2.8 The wicked would come to a religious conference in order to display their outward piety, to perpetuate the illusion that they are faithful to the Lord God of Israel and His servants. The righteous would attend the words of the living prophets that they might be comforted and strengthened. Shock, disappointment, distress, and revulsion were to be the emotions generated by Jacob's discourse to them at the temple

2.9 One can only imagine the challenge of having to admonish members of one's own family at the behest of the Lord God of Israel. Jacob is tasked with addressing three distinctive groups within his society: those who were beginning to embark on a course of conduct that would eventually bring to ruin an entire nation; those who, through their own spiritual sensitivity, were awakening to the fact that there were those close to them who were engaging in conduct unbecoming a disciple of Jesus Christ, and who were subtly afflicting them with their arrogance and perversions; and finally, those who were innocent, ignorant of the degradation which was about to break upon them. Jacob would reveal to all three groups at the same time, the heinousness of the sins and the reality of the danger which awaited them if the sinners did not repent. Those who had once felt secure would no longer enjoy that spirit of peace and rest.

2.10 As the spiritual leader of the Nephites, Jacob has the moral obligation to represent the Lord in his censure of their evil conduct. He knows what the effect of revealing to the innocent and unsuspecting the viciousness of their friends and neighbors will have on them. He knows that he will have to be instrumental in helping these tender souls regain their faith in human nature, to help them live in what will become for them a raw and fallen society. The pure and the innocent will be shocked; the suspecting will have their fears confirmed. It will be a great labor to bring the people back to a point where they can have any degree of unity within their ranks.

2.11 One is forced to ask the question as to what it was that brought Jacob to petition the Father. Was this the result of some uneasiness that he was feeling as he watched the members of his community live their lives from day to day? Had there been spouses or children of sinners who had come to him with their

before the presence of my Maker, that I must testify unto you concerning the wickedness of your hearts.

7 And also it grieveth me that I must use so much boldness of speech concerning you, before your wives and your children, many of whose feelings are exceedingly tender and chaste and delicate before God, which thing is pleasing unto God;

8 And it supposeth me that they have come up hither to hear the pleasing word of God, yea, the word which healeth the wounded soul.

{¶—1830}

9 Wherefore, it burdeneth my soul that I should be constrained, because of the strict commandment which I have received from God, to admonish you according to your crimes, to enlarge the wounds of those who are already wounded, instead of consoling and healing their wounds; and those who have not been wounded, instead of feasting upon the pleasing word of God have daggers placed to pierce their souls and wound their delicate minds.

10 But, notwithstanding the greatness of the task, I must do according to the strict commands of God, and tell you concerning your wickedness and abominations, in the presence of the pure in heart, and the broken heart, and under the glance of the piercing eye of the Almighty God.

{¶—1830}

11 Wherefore, I must tell you the truth according to the plainness of the word of God. For behold, as I inquired of the Lord, thus came the

Jacob 2:7
EM 4:1578
CR92-A 58
CR98-O 102
CR00-O 16
Jacob 2:7,9
CR01-O 96

Jacob 2:8
CR92-O 113
CR99-A 85

Jacob 2:9
EM 2:714
Jacob 2:9-10
CR94-A 27
Jacob 2:9,35
CR87-A 86

Jacob 2:10
FPM 146

Jacob 2:11
MD 780
DS 2:237

concerns and sorrow? It seems clear that prior to this prayer that Jacob did not know specifically what the malaise was that had infected his people. Jacob was undoubtedly as shocked and appalled as any of the tenderhearted in the congregation at what the Lord revealed to him the day before he was to deliver his address at the Temple.

2.12 In a closed society the possession of gold, silver, or any other precious metals or gems would seem fatuous. In practical matters, however, the value of these particularly metals was in their malleability and endurance. One of the first purposes that the gold was put to was for the fashioning of metal plates upon which they were able to keep their records.

2.12.38–39—*this land*—Whether this is in reference to the entire western hemisphere or solely to the land of Nephi we cannot say with certainty. We are certain, however, that when the family of Lehi first arrived in the Americas they found great reserves of precious metals (see *1 NE-C 18.25*)

2.13 Personal wealth in a Zion society is anathema to the spirit of unity. What must have transpired in this extended family to have provoked this unseemly lust for material goods? So long as Jacob's brother, Nephi, ruled as king of the land of Nephi, one can hardly imagine that the desire for private wealth would have been rampant among the people. One wonders then at Nephi's successors to the throne. Did any of them begin to exhibit the almost irresistible attraction of unrighteous dominion? Clearly there had been a serious decline in spirituality among the Nephites. They had come to a point where their intrinsic value as humans had become founded in their possessions, the logic being that their prosperity was a blessing from God and if one did not have possessions it must be so because they were unwilling to work sufficiently or they simply were unworthy. In either case, the problem pertained to the poor and not to the rich. Like the later Zoramites, the poor were eschewed from "polite" society.

2.13.44–45—*stiff necks*—The desire for wealth became so compelling that the eyes of the rich were fixed solely on its acquisition. They would not turn to the right or to the left in their progress towards ascendancy. They would not turn aside to aid or strengthen those who were suffering around them.

2.13.47–48—*high heads*—An expression that suggests aloofness from all other affairs but their own.

2.14 The purpose of personal and public wealth is to raise up the poor and afflicted, just as Jesus Christ performed the atoning sacrifice in order to preserve and bless his brothers and sisters weltering in mortality and suffering in the world of spirits. Wealth provides opportunities for service, a way in which the hearts of all men might be knit together in love and gratitude. Salvation and exaltation is a joint effort, designed to help us understand the mind and heart of God.

2.15 Clearly the Nephites in Jacob's audience had lost their ability to sense the hand of God in their lives and in the lives of those around them. How tenuous is mortal life! How easy it is to be catapulted into affliction and brought to an early grave! Jacob does not wish these kinds of catastrophes upon his people, but better that than to have the Nephites descend into depravity and destruc-

word unto me, saying: Jacob, get thou up into the temple on the morrow, and declare the word which I shall give thee unto this people.

{~~¶~~—1830}

12 And now behold, my brethren, this is the word which I declare unto you, that many of you have begun to search for gold, and for silver, and for all manner of precious ores, in the *which this land, which is a land of promise unto you and to your seed, doth abound most plentifully.

{~~¶~~—1830}

13 And the hand of providence hath smiled upon you most pleasingly, that you have obtained many riches; and because some of you have obtained more abundantly than that of your brethren ye are lifted up in the pride of your hearts, and wear stiff necks and high heads because of the costliness of your apparel, and persecute your brethren because ye suppose that ye are better than they.

{~~¶~~—1830}

14 And now, my brethren, do ye suppose that God justifieth you in this thing? Behold, I say unto you, Nay. But he condemneth you, and if ye persist in these things his judgments must speedily come unto you.

15 O that he would show you that he can pierce you, and with one glance of his eye he can smite you to the dust!

Jacob 2:12–13
EM 1:173

* p. 126

Jacob 2:13
DNTC 3:79
Jacob 2:13–14
MD 408
DNTC 2:230
CR87-A 39
Jacob 2:13–14, 21
CR90-O 82

tion because of abject wickedness. One is reminded of Nephi's desire to have a famine come upon the people of Zarahemla rather than have them shed each other's blood through acts of violence.

2.16 Pride leading to social stratification is wickedness and leads to spiritual death. Pride tends towards avarice of all kinds, exceptions to law and order, disregard of divine instruction, and ultimately to a debasement of the lives of all who are not part of the designated elite. Natural, cultural, and military disasters have a tendency to level the field, spiritually speaking. As terrifying a prospect as any of those things might be, Jacob would rather that the Nephites lost their material wealth and prosperity than to lose their souls.

2.17 One of the great tragedies of mortal life is to lose the spirit of unity, a large measure of which came with us from the eternal worlds where we were nurtured spiritually. Our birth upon the earth did not completely veil those sentiments. Yet in the process of time, after we begin our mortal sojourn, we are affected by the desires of the world, either as victims or as perpetrators. We forget that in the beginning we were all children of the same heavenly parents, that we are all objects of His eternal and perfect love. He is engaged in that glorious work to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of every soul, even as many as will. How can we possibly please the Most High by belittling each other in clearly onerous ways? That God has personal wealth there can be no question. What is His perfect example to us in terms of material things? Is He not willing to bless all of His children with the elements and the fruits of the earth, we who could accomplish nothing on our own? Can we not, therefore, have similar feelings towards the impoverished?

2.18 If the Kingdom of God has become the focus of our attention, what then could distract us from treating our fellow being with love and compassion? A righteous man, dedicated to the glory of God, could have immense wealth bestowed upon him and he would still remain humble and a blessing to those around himself. It is the wicked who misuse the perceived wealth of nations.

2.19 Abundance is a blessing come from God that we might learn to be as He is, or at least to be left without excuse for not having acquired that godly attribute. The means given seem to be for the sole purpose of doing as the Lord Jesus Christ did for the whole of humanity: providing opportunities for those who could not help themselves.

2.19.9—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who

16 O that he would rid you from this iniquity and abomination. And, O that ye would listen unto the word of his commands, and let not this pride of your hearts destroy your souls!

17 Think of your brethren like unto yourselves, and be familiar with all and free with your substance, that they may be rich like unto you.

18 But before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God.

19 And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and ye will seek them for the intent to do good—to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted.

Jacob 2:17
CR82-A 37
CR84-A 42
CR87-A 39, 41
Jacob 2:17–19
MD 653
DNTC 1:692
DNTC 2:435
DNTC 3:269
MM 3:192
EM 1:147
EM 3:1113
CR82-O 135
CR91-A 11

Jacob 2:18–19
EM 4:1551
CR80-O 29
CR87-A 39
CR99-A 11

Jacob 2:19
CR92-O 34
CR96-A 42

has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

2.19.14—*if*—A person might arrive a point in his mortal experience when he realizes that he really does not have a head or heart for material abundance. In this respect he would have arrived at a self-awareness like unto that of the converts of the sons of Mosiah, men and women who knew that they could no longer bear arms and retain their salvation.

2.20 It is one thing to simply neglect one's destitute neighbor with a stiff neck and a high head, it is quite another to afflict and torment him because of his poverty. The operative scriptural phrase here is "grinding the faces of the poor". How can one bring himself to persecute someone less fortunate than himself? In the desire for wealth and power it is more efficient to oppress those who cannot resist than to attempt to overwhelm one who has acquired wealth and power of his own. This is social Darwinism at its most virulent. Once the logical jump has been made equating wealth as the deserved blessing of the righteous, the poor can be treated as merely the wicked and depraved who have no societal rights whatsoever. The Zoramites, who we have mentioned before, perfected this cultural attitude.

2.21 God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ have commanded that the children of men ought to be united in their love for one another, filled with light and truth such that they have no disharmony among them. While it is a great labor for a people to arrive at a place where they may be of one heart and one mind, yet the alternative means spiritual death, a withdrawal of the Spirit of God. The first unity that we all share ought to be kept in the forefront of every man's mind and heart: we are all fallen creatures, have sinned and come short of the glory of God, as the Apostle Paul would say. It is the awareness of our own spiritual degeneracy that makes us capable of having a "broken heart" for our transgressions and a "contrite spirit" in the midst of our fellow beings. Only Jesus Christ merits eternal life based on his own conduct; all others are mutually dependant upon the atoning sacrifice of the Savior. How can we who have been enjoined to bear one another's burdens do anything to oppress those who are in the same spiritual circumstances as ourselves? Jacob is justifiably appalled at the conduct of his family.

2.22 As terrifying a prospect as the consequences of socially fragmenting pride was, recovery from that ill was far more plausible than the soul-destroying conduct which the men among the Nephites were contemplating.

2.23 Much is made of this verse and those that follow by men whose ignorance is only exceeded by their arrogance. This is not a repudiation of polygyny so much as it is a repudiation of immorality. That which God the Father commands us to do is by definition moral; that which He forbids us is immoral. We ought to feel grateful that He has required of us that which we are able to bear. The Lord God of Israel has led His children along from one truth to another, in an attempt to aid them in their acquisition of all divine attributes. Inasmuch as every dispensation and the inhabitants thereof have varying needs, the principles revealed to any body of saints may differ in order to accomplish the Lord's designs for His people. Among the ancient Israelites,

{~~9~~—1830}

20 And now, my brethren, I have spoken unto you concerning pride; and those of you which have afflicted your neighbor, and persecuted him because ye were proud in your hearts, of the things which God hath given you, what say ye of it?

21 Do ye not suppose that such things are abominable unto him who created all flesh? And the one being is as precious in his sight as the other. And all flesh is of the dust; and for the selfsame end hath he created them, that they should keep his commandments and glorify him forever.

22 And now I make an end of speaking unto you concerning this pride. And were it not that I must speak unto you concerning a grosser crime, my heart would rejoice exceedingly because of you.

23 But the word of God burdens me because of your grosser crimes. For behold, thus saith the Lord: This people begin to wax in iniquity; they understand not the scriptures, for they seek to excuse themselves in committing whoredoms, because of the things which were written concerning David, and Solo*mon his son.

Jacob 2:21
CR90-A 92

Jacob 2:22
CR80-O 7
Jacob 2:22–35
EM 1:147

Jacob 2:23
AF 254
Jacob 2:23–24
EM 1:360
EM 2:827
Jacob 2:23–35
EM 1:161

* p. 127

the practice of plural marriage was permitted; among the Nephites it was forbidden. Although we may speculate regarding the circumstances which might allow for the plurality of wives, in the end it is the will of God that is manifested when such a practice is introduced by revelation.

2.23.6—*burdens*—We might rightly suppose that if all that Jacob had to do was to address the issue of pride among his people, he could have effectively done so without causing much distress to the Nephites. Sexual immorality was, of course, a far more disturbing matter, and because it was being generated in the hearts and minds of a certain portion of the community in secret, the act of revealing such ignoble thoughts would do more than merely bring the sinning men to bay. There would be innocent women and children whose hearts would be broken at the secret ponderings of their husbands and fathers.

2.23.30—*scriptures*—As is the case with most apostates, the men waxing in iniquity focused on those places in the records of the House of Israel that seemed to justify the satisfying of their lustful desires. No one among them had apparently read that which had been commanded of Lehi, whose record also formed part of the Nephite scriptures, which had expressly forbidden that which they were contemplating.

2.23.35—*excuse*—We may assume that the burgeoning ranks of the willful knew that what they were privately proposing was contrary to the will of God, that they were beginning to transgress in a substantial way. They were on the brink of sinning, knew that fact, and were prepared to “excuse” themselves because of that which they seemed to find in the Brass Plates.

2.23.39—*whoredoms*—The English word “whoredoms” derives from Germanic roots which expressly refer to “adultery”. It has long since been employed to describe all illicit sexual intercourse, whether for hire or not.

2.23.48—*David*—While we cannot in any fashion condemn David for the wives that he took under his wing with the guidance and approval of the prophet Nathan, yet the king lost his eternal salvation, his exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom, because of the affair with Bathsheba and the proposed assassination of Uriah.

2.23.50—*Solomon*—Solomon’s sin was in perceiving marriage in his day as a political expedience. Therefore, of his one thousand wives, three hundred were given the more lofty status as wives; the other seven hundred were concubines. Almost all of these marriages were designed to hold a vassal state in political check. This practice, of course, debased the institution of marriage in the eyes of the people, a sentiment which continued almost unabated to the days of the mortal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2.24 What precisely constituted the “abomination” referred to here in the marital circumstances of David and Solomon? Certainly it was not the fact that they actually had more than one wife, else wise Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all would fall beneath this censure. Never once in all of the scriptural record has their morality ever been questioned. We may find in the lives of both David and Solomon conduct unbecoming a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. David was never condemned for having more than one wife; he was condemned for having taken the wife of Uriah to his own bed, and then to cover up his perfidy, plotted against the life of his friend. For this gross wickedness, David has lost all that he had been given of the Lord, both in time and in eternity. David was immoral on several accounts and thus his actions were

24 Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord.

Jacob 2:24–27
AGQ 4:212
Jacob 2:24–30
DHC 4:93

condemned by the Lord and reiterated by Jacob. Jacob knew that if plural marriage were illicitly introduced among the Nephites, crimes as grievous as that of David would certainly follow. As King of Israel, Solomon entered into marriage with gusto, having 300 wives and 700 concubines. While the modern mind might be stunned by the excess, the real problem is revealed in his taking of concubines, second-class wives, which betrayed a stratification of society which is anathema to the Kingdom of God and the people of Zion. In addition, Solomon's marriages were more for political purposes rather than for familial desires.

2.24.2—*David*—While we cannot in any fashion condemn David for the wives that he took under his wing with the guidance and approval of the prophet Nathan, yet the king lost his eternal salvation, his exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom, because of the affair with Bathsheba and the proposed assassination of Uriah.

2.24.4—*Solomon*—Solomon's sin was in perceiving marriage in his day as a political expedience. Therefore, of his one thousand wives, three hundred were given the more lofty status as wives; the other seven hundred were concubines. Almost all of these marriages were designed to hold a vassal state in political check. This practice, of course, debased the institution of marriage in the eyes of the people, a sentiment which continued almost unabated to the days of the mortal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ

2.25 Circumstances that might have justified the practice of plural marriage among another people did not exist among the Nephites. The Lord declares here that His intention was to raise up a righteous people and that the introduction of plural marriage among the Nephites would have been antithetical to His purposes. The departure from Jerusalem by Lehi and his family was to be understood in the same light as the exodus of ancient Israel from the land of Egypt. The Israelites were expected to leave all of the cultural icons behind them in Egypt in order that they might be established in the true faith, even including the leaven by which they made their bread. The Nephites were being required to do much of the same in order to inherit the rich blessings which their Lord had prepared for them.

2.25.17—*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.

2.25.41—*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.

2.26 In order to avoid all of the potential societal malaise associated with plural marriage, the Lord proscribed the Nephites in its practice.

25 Wherefore, thus saith the Lord, I have led this people forth out of the land of Jerusalem, by the power of mine arm, that I might raise up unto me a righteous branch from the fruit of the loins of Joseph.

26 Wherefore, I the Lord God will not suffer that this people shall do like unto them of old.

2.27 There was to be no social stratification whatsoever as manifested in concubinage nor was there to be allowed any of the paths that might lead to such practices. Thus, Nephite pride and the desires of the natural man were dealt with simultaneously.

2.28 The legitimate practice of plural marriage was never at issue among the Nephites, for it had never been commanded of them. What was in question was whether or not they were going to persist in their desires for immoral conduct. Plural marriage as defined and commanded by God is never immoral; human intervention in the affairs of God, usurpation of His prerogative to command His people, always is immoral. Whoredoms are always abominable; legal and lawful marriage in the eyes of God never is. Woe be unto those who would confuse the two.

2.29 The prosperity of the Nephites upon the promised land was possible only when they were obedient to the God of this land who is Jesus Christ. We do not have to look very far in this hemisphere to find regions that have been ruined by the disobedience of the inhabitants thereof.

2.30 The rationale given by the Lord here for plurality of wives, undoubtedly there may be others, is when there is a need to have a righteous generation raised up unto the Lord. It would seem, therefore, that a preponderance of righteous women as contrasted with a dearth of righteous men, would bring the Lord to a point where He would allow, even command, the practice of plural marriage. A righteous generation requires righteous parenting. Effective fathers and mothers are necessary to achieve this particular goal that the Lord is describing. We may easily note in the history of the Lord's people times when this extremity was required and the saints did as they were commanded to do. The default mode for the Lord's people, however, is monogamy.

2.31 It is the nature and disposition of almost all men, when they get a little authority, to begin to exercise unrighteous dominion. This is easily seen in the cruelty that can transpire within a home where the man of the house is not possessed of the Spirit of God. Marriage requires the righteousness and love of an extraordinary man in order for it to develop as the Lord has commanded; plural marriage requires a greater degree of personal faith and righteousness in order for the wives and children to feel that they are not being imposed upon by an un-Christ-like personage.

2.31.24—*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.

2.32 The trials and tribulations through which the Nephites were passing were sufficient for their spiritual growth toward salvation and exaltation. The additional strain on marital and familial relationships associated with plural marriage was not to be borne by the faithful women and children of the ancient Americas.

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

27 Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord: For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none;

28 For I, the Lord God, delight in the chastity of women. And whoredoms are an abomination before me; thus saith the Lord of Hosts.

{¶—1830}

29 Wherefore, this people shall keep my commandments, saith the Lord of Hosts, or cursed be the land for their sakes.

30 For if I will, saith the Lord of Hosts, raise up seed unto me, I will command my people; otherwise they shall hearken unto these things.

31 For behold, I, the Lord, have seen the sorrow, and heard the mourning of the daughters of my people in the land of Jerusalem, yea, and in all the lands of my people, because of the wickedness and abominations of their husbands.

32 And I will not suffer, saith the Lord of Hosts, that the cries of the fair daughters of this people, which I have led out of the land of Jerusalem, shall come up unto me against the men of my people, saith the Lord of Hosts.

Jacob 2:27–30
MD 578
DNTC 3:81
EM 4:1577

Jacob 2:28
MD 124, 709
DNTC 3:237
GD 310
EM 1:265
EM 2:487
CR80-A 90
Jacob 2:28–30
EM 3:1094

Jacob 2:30
AGQ 4:214
EM 1:147
EM 3:1109

Jacob 2:31
MF 252
FPM 146
Jacob 2:31–35
EM 1:265
Jacob 2:31,35
CR91-O 70

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.

2.33 Clearly it is the men that are at fault. The women among the ancient Nephites were innocent and filled with virtue. They were not to be destroyed by the viciousness of their men; those men would be held in check by the word of the Lord. There would be future instances of plural marriage among the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, but they would be sinners of the worst dye who had no fear of the Lord or of His servants.

2.34 The developing proposal to introduce plural marriage was done by the perpetrators in full knowledge of the commandments given to father Lehi. As is the case with most apostate conduct, the counterevidence for sinning has been ignored. Lehi was a living prophet of his day, followed by Nephi and then Jacob. The general charge to a people does not change with the death of a prophet, seer, and revelator, unless his divinely appointed successor is given specific instructions from God.

2.34.16—*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.

2.34.34–35—*these things*—The Lord through Jacob had censured the Nephites for two great abominations: social stratification and the desire to commit whoredoms.

2.35 We are left to wonder as to how far advanced the ruminations of the Nephite men had become. What sort of conduct, short of actual physical infidelity, would have caused such distress in the hearts and minds of the wives and children of these men? Was there visible leering, overt flirting going on? Had their husbands and fathers become verbally and physically abusive to their wives and children in anticipation of their entering into the unseemly practices condemned by Jacob? Could the women have been oblivious to the growing wickedness of their husbands? Anyone who has known a righteous woman knows the answer to that question. How do children respond to a father who treats their mother with contempt? The great tragedy in all of this is that there is a sentiment created in the hearts and minds of the wives and children of such vicious men that persuades them to wonder if they will ever have familial love again in this life.

2.35.9—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

33 For they shall not lead away captive the daughters of my people because of their tenderness, save I shall visit them with a sore curse, even unto destruction; for they shall not commit whoredoms, like unto them of old, saith the Lord of Hosts.

{~~¶~~—1830}

34 And now behold, my brethren, ye know that these commandments were given to our father, Lehi; wherefore, ye have known them before; and ye have come unto great condemnation; for ye have done these things which ye ought not to have done.

35 Behold, ye have done greater iniquities than the Lamanites, our brethren. Ye have broken the hearts of your tender wives, and lost the confidence of your children, because of your bad examples before them; and the sobbings of their hearts ascend up to God against you. And because of the strictness of the word of God, which cometh down against you, many hearts died, pierced with deep wounds.

Jacob 2:35
MF 252
FPM 146
EM 3:1314
CR80-O 7
CR83-O 77
CR87-O 81
CR88-O 40, 82
CR94-A 27
CR94-O 67
CR98-A 68
CR99-A 29
CR01-O 96

{Chapter II, continued}
(Chapter 3)

{¶—1830}

3.1 The wives and children of the Nephite men were suffering under the burden of the conduct of their husbands and fathers. Some had been keenly aware of the apostate motions within their society; others had been made aware by Jacob's sermon at the temple in the land of Nephi. The counsel to all of them was the same; the manner by which they would overcome their disappointment and terror associated with the revelations was the same. Only God the Father, through their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, could bring comfort to them in the midst of their afflictions. We may very well speculate about the nature of the justice that would be sent upon the unrepentant, but Jacob clearly articulates the impending doom in the following verses.

3.1.4—*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 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.

3.1.47—*those*—One must ask the question as to whom was Jacob referring when he spoke of those who were seeking the destruction of the pure in heart. Was it not those men among the Nephites who were plotting against the virtue and chastity of the women in their midst? One might point to the Lamanites, but within the context of Jacob's discourse it is clear as to where the threat was coming from.

3.2 The world of the pure in heart had been shattered by the revelation that there were those among them who plotted against their chastity and virtue. By remaining faithful to their covenants, however, through devout prayer, they would be able to withstand the afflictions of the mind and heart that had befallen them. Their alternative was to sink into the slough of despond, and surrender to the oblivion into which the wicked were quickly sinking.

3.3 The filthy in heart were those who thought to subvert the innocence of the Nephites through the institution of plural marriage into a society which had been commanded to hold to the principles of monogamy. By turning virtuous women into whores, the judgment of God would descend upon the Nephites. The Lamanites, a far more sexually virtuous people, would be unleashed upon them even until the Nephites were no more. The Lamanites had receive a cursing as a result of their rebellion against divinely appointed authority, but that chastisement would pale by comparison to the wretched condition into which the apostate Nephites would be cast for their immorality.

3.3.32—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

3.4 This prophecy would be accomplished during the days of Mosiah, the father of King Benjamin. By the time 320 years had passed since the departure of Lehi from the land of Jerusalem, or about 279 BC, the spiritual condition of the Nephites had degenerated sufficiently that the Lamanites had been

1 BUT behold, I, Jacob, would speak unto you that are pure in heart. Look unto God with firmness of mind, and pray unto him with exceeding faith, and he will console you *in your afflictions, and he will plead your cause, and send down justice upon those who seek your destruction.

Jacob 3
 EM 1:147
 EM 3:1164
 EM 4:1579
 CR98-O 102
 * p. 128
 Jacob 3:1
 CR86-O 14
 CR87-O 103
 CR93-A 114
 CR97-A 5
 CR00-O 85
 CR02-O 16
 Jacob 3:1–11
 EM 1:161

{¶—1830}

2 O all ye that are pure in heart, lift up your heads and receive the pleasing word of God, and feast upon his love; for ye may, if your minds are firm, forever.

Jacob 3:2
 CR87-O 103
 CR02-A 91

3 But, wo, wo, unto you that are not pure in heart, that are filthy this day before God; for except ye repent the land is cursed for your sakes; and the Lamanites, which are not filthy like unto you, nevertheless they are cursed with a sore cursing, shall scourge you even unto destruction.

Jacob 3:3
 AF 119
 CR00-O 57

4 And the time speedily cometh, that except ye repent they shall possess the land of your inheritance, and the Lord God will lead away the

allowed to destroy a goodly number of the inhabitants of the land of Nephi. Three generations later, sometime about the year 220 BC, Mosiah and those righteous men and women who would follow him were commanded to depart from the land of Nephi into the wilderness. They were guided by the hand of the Lord until they discovered the people of Mulek who had settled in the land which they called Zerahemla (see *OM-C 1.12–14*).

3.4.4—*speedily*—Assuming that Jacob delivered his discourse sometime before 421 BC, “speedily” could mean as much as 300 years from the time that the prophecy was given. We ought not to snicker at such a time frame; in the end, everyone concerned realized too late that the time was, indeed, too short. A close reading of the narratives that follow the writings of Jacob reveal that this specific caution was repeated again and again.

3.5 It must have been particularly galling to the bigoted minds of the apostate Nephites to have themselves unfavorably compared to the rebellious Lamanites. There is no question that the Lamanites were living in great spiritual darkness, a token of which was their barbarous standard of living and their outward appearance. Their physical features were such that the Nephites in general would not think to intermarry with them (see *2 NE-C 5.20–25*). The Nephites, however, had fallen into a worse condition than their brethren as exemplified by their lust of illicit relationships.

3.5.3—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

3.6 That the Nephites toward the end of their tenure upon the face of the land had once again descended into great sexual immorality is described in some detail by Mormon in a pained letter to his son Moroni (see *MR-C 9.9–14*). For these and other perversions, the Nephites were completely destroyed as a people. The Lamanites, though fallen and vicious, did not exhibit, even in the heat of battle, the same kind of corruption. For that reason, they were allowed to survive the cataclysm at the Hill Cumorah. One wonders at the fate of the Jaredites, both of the conflicting parties destroying one another to the last man, literally. What sort of wickedness preceded their annihilation?

3.7 The Lamanites of Jacob’s day had suffered from the spiritual dyspepsia of their ancestors. The Nephites had no such excuse. The wickedness among the Nephites was the product of a conscious choice on their part.

3.8 As is the case with most racial prejudice, the Nephites had begun to view the Lamanites as being evil because of the color of their skin and other physical features. The Lamanites were objectionable because of the way they thought and acted, not because of the way they looked. Jacob uses their own

righteous out from among you.

5 Behold, the Lamanites your brethren, whom ye hate because of their filthiness and the cursing which hath come upon their skins, are more righteous than you; for they have not forgotten the commandment of the Lord, which was given unto our father—that they should have save it were one wife, and concubines they should have none, and there should not be whoredoms committed among them.

6 And now, this commandment they observe to keep; wherefore, because of this observance, in keeping this commandment, the Lord God will not destroy them, but will be merciful unto them; and one day they shall become a blessed people.

7 Behold, their husbands love their wives, and their wives love their husbands; and their husbands and their wives love their children; and their unbelief and their hatred towards you is because of the iniquity of their fathers; wherefore, how much better are you than they, in the sight of your great Creator?

{~~¶~~—1830}

8 O my brethren, I fear that unless ye shall repent of your sins that their skins will be whiter than yours, when ye shall be brought with them

Jacob 3:5
EM 1:191
EM 2:827
Jacob 3:5–9
MD 429

Jacob 3:7
EM 4:1578
CR89-O 27
CR91-A 31

Jacob 3:8
TSWK 239

terminology to describe their ultimate spiritual circumstances if they did not repent of their abominations and rebellions.

3.9 Jacob conveys to his people in no uncertain terms that their racial prejudice was doing nothing to aid them in their spiritual development. The Lamanites bore all of the outward markers of that which the Nephites were suffering spiritually. The light of Christ and the influence of the Holy Ghost were fading quickly, leaving them spiritually benighted. Their failure to repent of their sins and their desire to gratify the lusts of the flesh would make them far more uncivilized in godly company than those whom they condemned for their unkempt appearance. The Lamanites were in their state of affairs because of the traditions of their fathers; the Nephites were willfully turning their society into a pig sty.

3.10 Again, the Lamanites of Jacob's day were the way they were because their parents had rebelled against the servants of God and the revelations which they had received through those servants. Jacob testifies that the fate of the children of the Nephites, even unto a reversion to barbarity, would come to their posterity if they did not turn themselves about in their wickedness and seek forgiveness from the Lord God of Israel. The Nephites would be held accountable for any spiritual degeneration among their children if they persisted in their lusts of the flesh.

3.11 The sentiment of Jacob's warning to his brethren is quite similar to that given by father Lehi to his sons, Laman and Lemuel (see 2 *NE-C* 1.12–14). Lehi spoke of the sleep of hell and the chains by which the children are bound and carried into the gulf of misery and woe. Jacob himself had spoken at length regarding the fate of the wicked and the endless torment which was metaphorically described as a lake of fire and brimstone (see 2 *NE-C* 9.16–26). Nephi evoke the image of the second death in his discourse about the latter days and the methods Satan would use to bind the hearts and minds of the children of men (see 2 *NE-C* 28.20–23).

3.12 Jacob was true to the tasks to which he had been set by Nephi and the Lord. As distressing and onerous as the labor was, he testified against their wickedness.

3.12.4—*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 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.

3.12.13—*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.

3.12.18—*fornication*—Strictly speaking, fornication is sexual misconduct between members of the opposite gender who are not married. Adultery is the same act involving one who has entered into the marriage covenant. In the early part of the 19th century, the meaning of "forni-

before the throne of God.

9 Wherefore, a commandment I give unto you, which is the word of God, that ye revile no more against them because of the darkness of their skins; neither shall ye revile against them because of their filthiness; but ye shall remember your own filthiness, and remember that their filthiness came because of their fathers.

10 Wherefore, ye shall remember your children, how that ye have grieved their hearts because of the example that ye have set before them; and also, remember that ye may, because of your filthiness, bring your children unto destruction, and their sins be heaped upon your heads at the last day.

{~~9~~—1830}

11 O my brethren, hearken unto my words; arouse the faculties of your souls; shake yourselves that ye may awake from *the slumber of death; and loose yourselves from the pains of hell that ye may not become angels to the devil, to be cast into that lake of fire and brimstone which is the second death.

12 And now I, Jacob, spake many more things unto the people of Nephi, warning them against fornication and lasciviousness, and every kind of sin, telling them the awful consequences of them.

Jacob 3:9
TSWK 239, 607

Jacob 3:10
EM 4:1507
CR84-A 97

Jacob 3:11
AGQ 1:175
AGQ 5:109
MD 281
CR01-A 30
* p. 129

cation” encompassed sexual intercourse between unmarried persons and intercourse between a married man and an unmarried woman. Given the nature of Jacob’s censure we should probably understand this latter definition as being the one intended in the translation. The practice of plural marriage when forbidden by divine law would qualify as fornication.

3.12.20—*lasciviousness*—The English word “lasciviousness” derives from roots which mean “relax, loosen, soft, wanton”. In usage, the semantic value of the word focuses on “irregular indulgence of animal lusts, wanton, lewd, luxurious, tendency to excite lust”. The Nephites’ problems are exposed in the use of this word. They were doting upon each other with extreme wealth and attempting to promote illicit behavior in the hearts of the innocent and naïve.

3.13 Jacob refers to his record by his own name, notwithstanding the fact that Nephi himself had fabricated the metal sheets upon which Jacob was writing. We ought to conclude that Jacob finished his account regarding his sermon at the Temple and then wrote his presentation of the Allegory of Zenos at a latter time. There may very well be a space of time between the writing and commentary on the Allegory and Jacob’s account of his encounter with Sherem.

3.13.16—*numerous*—The growth of the population would eventually become exponential, probably many thousands by the time that Jacob passed away.

3.13.21–22—*these plates*—Meaning the Small Plates of Nephi upon which Jacob was recording his account.

3.13.32–33—*larger plates*—Meaning upon the Large Plates of Nephi upon which Nephi had originally begun his account of his people

3.13.36—*wars*—Implying, perhaps, the Nephite battles with the Lamanites. Nephi made reference to these within the first thirty years of the establishment of the Nephite nation (see 2 *NE-C* 5.34).

3.13.39—*contentions*—Probably in reference to internal dissensions in the land of Nephi, but could have been a reference like unto that of Nephi with regard to their interactions with the Lamanites (see 2 *NE-C* 5.34)

3.14 Jacob makes reference to his writings upon the plates of Nephi as now pertaining to himself, even though his brother had physically manufactured them.

3.14.1–2—*these plates*—Meaning the Small Plates of Nephi upon which Jacob was recording his account.

3.14.8—*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 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.

3.14.17—*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 And a hundredth part of the proceedings of this people, which now began to be numerous, cannot be written upon these plates; but many of their proceedings are written upon the larger plates, and their wars, and their contentions, and the reigns of their kings.

Jacob 3:13
EM 2:845
CR86-A 75
CR99-O 89

14 These plates are called the plates of Jacob, and they were made by the hand of Nephi. And I make an end of speaking these words.

{Chapter III}
(Chapter 4)

{¶—1830}

4.1 Jacob was given a divine commission to bring salvation to his people through the preaching of the Gospel of Christ. He no doubt sensed that he was accomplishing in large measure that which had been given him to do and that he had the approbation of God the Eternal Father. Having done what the Lord had required of him regarding those who dwelt in the land of Nephi, he felt deep and abiding concern for the welfare of those who would come after he and his brethren had left mortality. He had seen, as had his brother Nephi, the great trials and tribulations that would come upon their posterity and the reasons they would succumb to the temptations of the devil. They therefore readily responded to the commandment to prepare metal plates upon which they could record their testimonies, an account of their faith, and the direct blessings which they had received on a regular basis. Jacob knew that these records would have to last many hundreds of years and was grateful for Nephi's knowledge of metallurgy. The Brass Plates had been of enormous value to the Nephites and both Nephi and Jacob hoped that their preserved words would serve their posterity as well.

4.1.9—*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 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.

4.2 We are not told what other media the Nephites used to record their history, but we may suppose that they used parchment made from animal skins inasmuch as that had been a common practice among the Israelites for generations. The unavailability of Egyptian papyrus would have eliminated the use of ancient traditional paper, although other materials may have been discovered which could have served in a similar way.

4.2.31—*children*—In reference to their direct descendants who would be known as Nephites.

4.2.36—*brethren*—In reference to the posterity of Laman and Lemuel and those who had followed them in their apostasy.

4.2.47—*fathers*—Jacob knew that there would come a time in the which the Nephites would cease to exist as a culture. The surviving culture, that of the Lamanites, would continue, being a blood line mixture of all of the children of Lehi, both Lamanites and Nephites alike.

4.3 Jacob and the other Nephite prophets wrote so that truth would ultimately triumph over tradition. Both the Lamanites and the Nephites suffered under the weight of the mistakes and prejudices of their ancestors. One of the major purposes of their writings was to present the teachings of Christ in such a way so as to stir up faith in the hearts of their posterity. When the time came for the Gospel of Christ to be revealed to them, the children of the Lamanites should not look upon their direct ancestors with disdain. Nor should the descendants of the Nephites look with disdain upon the failure of their ancestors to maintain their righteousness. All of the children of Lehi should find contentment in the fact that the Lord looked down upon them in mercy and compassion, foreseeing their needs and fulfilling their eventual desires many

1 NOW behold, it came to pass that I, Jacob, having ministered much unto my people in word, (and I cannot write but a little of my words, because of the difficulty of engraving our words upon plates) and we know that the things which we write upon plates must remain;

Jacob 4
EM 1:147
Jacob 4:1
CR93-A 14
Jacob 4:1-4
EM 2:714

2 But whatsoever things we write upon anything save it be upon plates must perish and vanish away; but we can write a few words upon plates, which will give our children, and also our beloved brethren, a small degree of knowledge concerning us, or concerning their fathers—

Jacob 4:2-5
EM 4:1507

3 Now in this thing we do rejoice; and we labor diligently to engraven these words upon plates, hoping that our beloved brethren and our children will receive them with thankful hearts, and look upon them that they may learn with joy and not with sorrow, neither with contempt, concerning their first parents.

Jacob 4:3
CR93-A 14
CR93-O 111
CR00-O 56

centuries in anticipation.

4.4 One of the great tragedies among the Nephites was the difficulty they had in believing that any man could know of future events with exacting detail. Thus, belief in a coming Messiah, in many instances, was strenuously resisted. We find similar disbelief in the minds and hearts of the peoples of the earth, particularly among those who consider themselves learned and sophisticated. The disbelief of the Lamanites and of the Nephites did not hinder in any way the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ to them after his resurrection from the dead. No amount of incredulity will hinder the coming of the Son of Man in glory to redeem and to perfect this earth as a Celestial habitation for the just.

4.4.8—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

4.5 Jacob’s appeal to the ancient prophets of Israel is justifiable. While the primary task of most of those holy men was to call a recalcitrant people to repentance, they invariably bore solemn testimony of the future redemption of mankind through the offices of the Messiah. A man cannot be a true prophet of God without a personal witness of the living Christ. Thus, in the writings of Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, Zechariah and a host of others may be found fervent expressions of hope and anticipation, looking forward to the day when the power of God would be wielded against the powers of hell and death.

4.5.5—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in

4 For, for this intent have we written these things, that they may know that we knew of Christ, and we had a hope of his glory many hundred years before his coming; and not only we ourselves had a hope of his glory, but also all the holy prophets which were before us.

{¶—1830}

5 Behold, they believed in Christ and worshiped the Father in his name, and also we worship the Father in his name. And for this intent we keep the law of Moses, it pointing our souls to him; and for this cause it is sanctified unto us for righteousness, even as it was accounted unto Abraham in the wilderness to be obedient unto the commands of God in offering *up his son Isaac, which is a similitude of God and his Only Begotten Son.

Jacob 4:4
MD 605
DNTC 1:251
PM 77
EM 1:31, 83, 148
EM 2:727, 729,
892, 894
EM 3:1161, 1162
CR94-O 45
CR99-O 90
Jacob 4:4–5
AF 412
PM 305, 335
PM 421, 559
MLM 185
EM 1: 8, 161,
217
EM 2:726
EM 3:1029, 1165
Jacob 4:4–6
EM 2:845

Jacob 4:5
MA 113
MD 546, 773
DNTC 3:207
PM 452
MM 1:364
EM 1:10
EM 2:731, 745,
746, 748, 812
EM 3:1067, 1249
CR92-O 51
* p. 130
Jacob 4:5,11
CR93-A 34

similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

4.5.11–12—*his name*—There are many within the pale of traditional Christianity who have grave doubts as to whether Gospel of Jesus Christ was known among the covenant peoples who lived before the birth of the Savior. However, there is a bright cloud of witnesses assuring us that the Father of all has been active in revealing to His children the promise of salvation through His Son

4.5.24—*pointing*—Jacob’s imagery is similar to that of the Apostle Paul who refers to the Law of Moses as the schoolmaster, or the students’ guide, to the teacher sent from God.. Amaleki, in rebuking the wicked priests of Noah, will attribute to the Law the power to bring salvation into the lives of the faithful because it testified of the coming of a fullness through the revelations of Jesus Christ.

4.5.31—*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”.

4.5.46—*Abraham*—The sacrifice of Isaac by his father Abraham is one of the most sublime stories told in all of sacred writ, and yet few acknowledge the profound theological impact that the experience had on Abraham’s family. Were Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac all knowledgeable and conscious Christians? In every sense and sentiment of the word, and more so than most of those today who profess discipleship to Jesus of Nazareth.

4.5.55—*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.

4.5.72—*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.

4.6 The Nephites partook of scripture study, personal prayer, obedience to the truth as inspired by the Spirit of God. As a result, their personal experiences with the Lord God of Israel assured them of their acceptability before Him and aided them as they pressed forward along the path of salvation towards the fulfillment of the promises that have been divinely extended to them. These were not weak-minded or intimidated people; they had become saints of God in full fellowship with the angels of Heaven.

4.6.5—*prophets*—Those whose writings appeared on the Brass Plates and those preserved on the Plates of Nephi, both Small and Large. The Nephites were the beneficiaries of continual revelation for nearly a thousand years.

4.6.10—*revelations*—The Nephites received revelations, both personal and cultural, because they were filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost.

4.6.13–15—*spirit of prophecy*—The spirit of prophecy is, by definition, the testimony of Jesus Christ.

4.6.40—*Jesus*—As was the case with John the Baptist, the name of the Savior was provided by revelation. “Jesus” is the Hellenized version of the Hebrew name “Yehoshua”, “Oshea” or “Joshua”. The name itself means “Savior”, literally, “Jehovah put [us] into a place of safety”.

4.6.45—*obey*—We are somewhat familiar with the power of faithful priesthood bearers in conjunction with the waves of the sea. Lehi’s family preserved their account of their travails upon the great waters. One wonders, however, what set of circumstances required the obedience of trees or that of mountains. Perhaps some of these things transpired as the Nephites were required to flee into the land of Nephi in order to be preserved against the fury of their brethren, the Lamanites.

4.7 The spiritual giants among the Nephites were continually reminded as to the sources of their power and prosperity. They were continually reminded that they had not yet achieved perfection regardless of the enormous power that they wielded in the name of Jesus Christ. They were continually reminded that were still apprentices and not yet masters. God is no less merciful to us in these latter days.

4.7.18—*grace*—No true disciple of Jesus Christ can believe that there is any aggregate of activities or performances that can bring us to God without the intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace does come, however, after all we can do to invoke that grace. They are simple acts, indeed, well within our abilities as mortal beings, thus once again manifesting the mercy of our God.

4.8 Men may boast of their achievements in pure science and technology, but one fact remains clear: even the brightest and most accomplished among us falls far short of all that is knowable. We dwelt on a small planet in the midst of unimaginable vastness, a universe filled with worlds, stars, galaxies, and objects completely beyond our ken. What of the inhabitants of these worlds, their history and achievements, their science and technology? We are as children in a nursery, far more dependant than any of us would care to admit. Wherein may we boast? The truly wise will perceive immediately that if we care to know and understand more of that which is, that which was, and that which is to come, in their totality, we need far more assistance than the drooling infant squatted on the floor next to us. Hence, the value of revelation, a divine teacher to guide us into intellectual and spiritual maturity.

6 Wherefore, we search the prophets, and we have many revelations and the spirit of prophecy; and having all these witnesses we obtain a hope, and our faith becometh unshaken, insomuch that we truly can command in the name of Jesus and the very trees obey us, or the mountains, or the waves of the sea.

7 Nevertheless, the Lord God showeth us our weakness that we may know that it is by his grace, and his great condescensions unto the children of men, that we have power to do these things.

{¶—1830}

8 Behold, great and marvelous are the works of the Lord. How unsearchable are the depths of the mysteries of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways. And no man knoweth of his ways save it be revealed unto him; wherefore, brethren, despise not the revelations of God.

Jacob 4:6
MA 86
AF 104
EM 1:204
CR94-O 46
CR01-A 76
Jacob 4:6–7
CR93-A 98

Jacob 4:8
MD 647
EM 1:395, 402
CR86-O 71
CR87-O 37
CR89-A 37
CR89-O 9, 106
CR02-O 91

4.9 God speaks and the elements obey; He utters His commandments and the spirits rejoice. The Nephite power over the elements, over the waves of the sea, the trees of the field, and the mountains of the earth came about because they were spiritually in tune with the mind of God. They knew what was possible because they knew Him. When they were confronted with seemingly insurmountable obstacles, they petitioned the Father to know of His will. Once aware what He would allow and desire, the bearers of the priesthood could move forward with confidence, knowing that they would not only be successful in their endeavors but that in so doing they would please God.

4.10 Jacob had taught his brethren many years before that the learning of men oft leads to a self-congratulating attribution of wisdom (see *2 NE-C 9.28*). To ignore the fountain of all light and truth is the height of intellectual dishonesty. God is God, after all.

4.11 The Father is prepared to pour out upon us all that He knows and understands if we will be but proper vessels for those blessings, cleansed within and without. We are purified and sanctified through the atonement of Christ, prepared in every way to receive the fullness of truth. Through the resurrection our bodies are perfected and sanctified that we may be, literally, vessels of light, the sons and daughters of God, the offspring of Him who has all things continually before Him, past, present, and future.

4.11.12—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

4.11.21–22—*a resurrection*—Every man, woman, and child who has come to this earth in mortality will be raised from the dead into immortality, endless life. That is a free gift brought about by the power of God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The quality of immortality, however, will differ for every individual according to the spiritual redemption that has taken place in his or her life. A person may be restored to his physical body and then be consigned to an eternal state of misery, as will be the sons of perdition. The scriptures clearly teach that for most of the children of men, their eternal circumstances will

9 For behold, by the power of his word man came upon the face of the earth, which earth was created by the power of his word. Wherefore, if God being able to speak and the world was, and to speak and man was created, O then, why not able to command the earth, or the workmanship of his hands upon the face of it, according to his will and pleasure?

10 Wherefore, brethren, seek not to counsel the Lord, but to take counsel from his hand. For behold, ye yourselves know that he counsel-eth in wisdom, and in justice, and in great mercy, over all his works.

11 Wherefore, beloved brethren, be reconciled unto him through the atonement of Christ, his Only Begotten Son, and ye may obtain a resurrection, according to the power of the resurrection which is in Christ, and be presented as the first-fruits of Christ unto God, having faith, and obtained a good hope of glory in him before he manifesteth himself in the flesh.

Jacob 4:9
MD 844
PM 199

Jacob 4:10
MD 166
CR89-A 6
CR92-O 7
CR94-A 10
CR99-O 115

Jacob 4:11
AF 94
MD 546, 620
PM 260
EM 2:739
Jacob 4:11–12
PM 227
CR93-A 34
CR99-O 90
Jacob 4:11,12
CR93-O 49

fall into one of three general categories: the Telestial, the Terrestrial, or the Celestial Kingdom, according to the degree of reconciliation that has been made by each individual. When Jacob speaks of “a resurrection” that will establish someone as being of the “first-fruits of Christ”, he is speaking of those who are brought back into the presence of God the Father as Celestial beings.

4.11.45—*faith*—Those who dwelt before the birth of Christ exercised faith in a being who had not yet descended to the earth as the Messiah. They believed in the coming of the Christ because of the words of the prophets, because of their interviews with the supreme being, because of the whisperings of the Spirit of God in their minds and in their hearts. There were few, if any, outward evidences as to the truthfulness of the Savior’s coming, yet they still looked forward to the day when the atonement would be assured and when the first saints would rise from the dead with Jesus to inherit eternal life. In the latter days, our faith and confidence in the mortal ministry is supported by some limited, outward evidences as to his life and ministry. Yet for the most part, we must exercise faith in the applicability of Jesus’ atonement to ourselves. Those of us in this dispensation also look forward to a coming of Christ, this time in glory to rule upon the earth for a thousand years. In faith we perceive a total remission of our sins; in faith we look forward to our liberation from the physical vicissitudes of this fallen world through death and resurrection.

4.12 By exercising faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, by repenting of one’s sins unto a life acceptable before God, by receiving the ordinance of baptism by immersion for the remission of those sins, a man might then be prepared to receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost. The Spirit of God is a revelator, the third member of the Godhead from whom all knowledge may be acquired, whether of the past, present, or future. Why, then, not speak of the plan by which men may be brought back into the presence of God, illuminated and glorified every whit?

4.12.20—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

4.13 The Jews did not mind having prophets among them so long as those holy men spoke in veiled language, cloaking the truth of God in deeply

{*—1830*}

12 And now, beloved, marvel not that I tell you these things; for why not speak of the atonement of Christ, and attain to a perfect knowledge of him, as to attain to the knowledge of a resurrection and the world to come?

13 Behold, my brethren, he that prophesieth, let him prophesy to the

Jacob 4:12
CR84-A 30
CR86-O 71
CR96-O 48
CR01-O 22

Jacob 4:13
MD 441, 811

complex metaphorical terms. Nephi had not taught his people the manner of the prophesying of the Jews because he preferred clarity and plainness over obfuscation (see 2 NE-C 25.1–6). In this verse Jacob also gives a clear definition as to what constitutes truth. It is that which reflects absolute reality, whether past, present, or future. There are those today who, like Korihor of old, attempt to persuade the minds of men that truth is relative, that what may be certain for one man may be a base falsehood to another. This, of course, is merely the posturing of an anti-Christ. Those who partake of this spirit will ultimately find themselves upon the wide expanse of eternity with neither rudder nor sail.

4.14 One wonders if Jacob’s caution to his people had come about because some among them desired to have the truth be a little more rhetorically flexible. Jacob clearly declares the fate of those who entertain this notion in a serious way. The Gospel of Jesus Christ should not be viewed as some sort of intellectual endeavor. One modern prophet, seer, and revelator spoke of this sort of meandering as being in the thick of thin things. The principles of salvation are simple, easy to be understood, filled with hope and charity. Of course, with clarity comes the command to live up to that which one understands. If comprehension can be put off for a while because of the obtuseness of the prophet, so much the better for those presently unwilling to conform their personal conduct to some standard higher than the groveling lusts of a fallen world. When a man sent from God begins the cry of repentance to an unwilling people, almost immediately and almost invariably they seek to take his life. The Jews present the archetypal study in such truculence.

4.14.4—*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.

4.14.41—*mark*—The English word “mark” has its roots in Germanic languages and is generally in reference to a “border”, as its sister word “march” reveals. In this sense, the Jews were looking for opportunities to step beyond the boundaries of propriety for a covenant and holy people. By having done so, they became blind because of the loss of the Spirit of God. Jacob had noted a similar effect in the lives of the Nephites as they had sought to justify plural marriage.

4.14.81—*stumble*—The salubrious effect of stumbling would be, hopefully, that they would become aware of their self-inflicted blindness and come to their senses about the course of life they were taking.

4.15 Jacob’s citation of the Allegory of Zenos is ostensibly an attempt to demonstrate how the Jews, as a covenant people, could ever hope to obtain salvation having once rejected the Lord God of Israel in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. The Allegory answers the question as to how enduring the promises of God are when once made to his servants. If a generation, fully aware of what it is doing, were to abandon the faith of their fathers, would there ever be an opportunity for the children of those apostates to have the Gospel of Christ extended to them? Our minds and hearts tell us that in the eternal scheme of things there must be such an opportunity. The intriguing thing about the Allegory is that it answers a far more important question for Jacob and his family. The prophets, seers, and revelators of the Nephites had seen in vision

understanding of men; for the Spirit speaketh the truth and lieth not. Wherefore, it speaketh of things as they really are, and of things as they really will be; wherefore, these things are manifested unto us plainly, for the salvation of our souls. But behold, we are not witnesses alone in these things; for God also spake them unto prophets of old.

{*¶*—1830}

14 But behold, the Jews were a stiffnecked people; and they *despised the words of plainness, and killed the prophets, and sought for things that they could not understand. Wherefore, because of their blindness, which blindness came by looking beyond the mark, they must needs fall; for God hath taken away his plainness from them, and delivered unto them many things which they cannot understand, because they desired it. And because they desired it God hath done it, that they may stumble.

{*¶*—1830}

15 And now I, Jacob, am led on by the Spirit unto prophesying; for I perceive by the workings of the Spirit which is in me, that by the stumbling of the Jews they will reject the stone upon which they might build and have safe foundation.

PM 77
 CR82-A 37, 57
 CR83-O 79
 CR85-A 92
 CR85-O 21
 CR86-A 46
 CR86-O 71, 72
 CR87-O 12, 37
 CR88-A 9
 CR90-A 79
 CR90-O 18
 CR91-O 40
 CR92-A 55
 CR92-O 91
 CR94-A 13, 118
 CR94-O 45
 CR96-O 107
 CR97-A 13
 CR00-O 49
 Jacob 4:13–14
 CR95-A 90
 CR00-O 45
 * p. 131
 Jacob 4:14
 MF 45
 PM 421
 MM 2:390
 CR81-A 14
 CR84-A 82
 CR87-O 11, 12
 CR93-O 24
 CR95-O 64
 Jacob 4:14–15
 MM 1:238

Jacob 4:15
 PM 494
 EM 1:31
 Jacob 4:15–16
 PM 174
 CR92-O 61
 Jacob 4:15–18
 DNTC 3:293

that there would come a time when the Nephite civilization would cease to exist, destroyed by the terrible hatred embodied in the ranks of the Lamanites. The blood line of the Nephites, however, would continue among the Lamanites and thus Jacob and Nephi had a vested interest as to what would happen to their seed. Were the transgressions of Laman and Lemuel and the perennial hatred of their posterity so great that no one of their descendants would ever be brought to a knowledge of the plan of salvation? This question is answered directly by the Allegory and, by analogy, the initial question regarding the Jews is also resolved.

4.15.4—*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 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.

4.15.32—*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.

4.15.37—*stone*—In reference to Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone of the Kingdom of God, by which, metaphorically speaking, the perfect orientation of mankind is platted in eternity, width, depth, and height.

4.16 The name, person, and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ is the only means in time and in eternity whereby the inhabitants of this earth may find redemption from death and hell, the only means by which they can find peace and comfort, the only means by which they can be reconciled to God the Eternal Father.

4.16.6—*scriptures*—Scholars frequently point to Psalm 118:22 (“The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner”) and Isaiah 28:16 (“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste”) as the probable citations to which Jacob was referring, but as we have seen many times before, the Brass Plates contained the writings of many prophets whose names are not included in the text of the Old Testament.

4.16.24—*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.

4.17 Again, the central question has to do with the redemption of a covenant people who had, *en masse*, rejected the light and truth of Heaven and made their apostasy a matter of cultural tradition. How can the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob be fulfilled if multiple generations of their posterity rejected the Spirit of the Lord? The same is true of those promises made to Lehi, Nephi, and Jacob.

4.18 The role of a prophet and revelator is a cooperative one with those for whom he has charge. Both the teacher and the student must be filled with the Spirit of God if any lasting effect is to transpire in the lives of the people. Jacob has already been deeply shaken by the pride and lasciviousness of the Nephites, but here hopes that the repentance process is far enough along that they will all be comforted by his words and those of the prophet Zenos.

16 But behold, according to the scriptures, this stone shall become the great, and the last, and the only sure foundation, upon which the Jews can build.

17 And now, my beloved, how is it possible that these, after having rejected the sure foundation, can ever build upon it, that it may become the head of their corner?

18 Behold, my beloved brethren, I will unfold this mystery unto you; if I do not, by any means, get shaken from my firmness in the Spirit, and stumble because of my over anxiety for you.

Jacob 4:18
EM 2:714

{Chapter III, continued}
(Chapter 5)

{¶—1830}

5.1 Central to Jacob’s rehearsal of the Allegory of Zenos is his interest in the fate of his own people. If it is possible for the descendants of the other recalcitrant remnants of the House of Israel to find eventual redemption, then it is also possible for the posterity of Lehi.

5.1.10—*read*—What we must ask ourselves is how available were the writings that had been preserved upon the Brass Plates. Did the Nephites develop and use other media upon which they could transcribe those portions of the scriptures which they desired to have in their personal possession? We have no way of knowing at this point, but it is clear that study of the scriptures was a common practice among the Nephites or Jacob could not have framed his question the way that he did.

5.1.16—*Zenos*—The writings of this great prophet were constantly cited by Lehi and Nephi and other Nephite prophets. An 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*). Nephi testified that the prophet knew of the events surrounding the death and burial of the Savior (see *1 NE-C 19.10–17*). Jacob, the brother of Nephi quotes here 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 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.

5.1.24—*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.

5.2 It was the House of Israel’s frequent disregard of the servants of God that they were oppressed and scattered. The imagery of the allegory clearly exemplifies their continual perversity, even in the face of divine kindness, generosity, and effort.

5.2.6—*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.

5.2.14—*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.

5.3 We refer to the allegory given here in Jacob as having been devised by

1 BEHOLD, my brethren, do ye not remember to have read the words of the prophet Zenos, which he spake unto the house of Israel, saying:

2 Hearken, O ye house of Israel, and hear the words of me, a prophet of the Lord.

3 For behold, thus saith the Lord,

Jacob 5
 AF 320, 327,
 333, 512
 AGQ 1:151
 AGQ 2:57
 AGQ 4:39, 139,
 141, 203
 MD 454, 607
 DNTC 1:284
 DNTC 3:293
 DS 3:180
 EM 1: 31, 147,
 148, 183
 EM 2:462, 708,
 749
 EM 3:1027,
 1163, 1164
 EM 4:1624
 Jacob 5:1–77
 EM 4:1623

Jacob 5:3

Zenos, but it is clear from the language used in this instance that the imagery employed was formulated by the Lord God of Israel. The olive tree, like the House of Israel, had been nourished by the master of the vineyard from the time it was hardly more than a scion. As to how long this had been the case, we are not told, except that the tree was more than fully mature. It was old and large portions of the tree were suffering. How many years of bountiful harvest had the tree provided before this calamity descended upon it? Again, we are not told and in the end it is irrelevant to the story. Regardless of its age, it was still capable of considerable service to the master of the vineyard.

5.3.14—*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.

5.3.18–19—*tame olive tree*—The implication of the adjective is that the “tameness” of this olive tree is in opposition to its native state. The tree has been “tamed” and not merely prevented from becoming “wild”. The House of Israel had been taken from among other fallen men and women and had been set apart with principles and ordinances of salvation, enduring covenants which would lead them in the paths of righteousness and bring them, ultimately, to the throne of God illuminated, edified, and perfected.

5.4 All of this attention heaped upon the tree should have brought forth the desired results. Throughout the allegory, the master of the vineyard and his servants are continually surprised as the apparent obstinacy of the trees. Trees are trees and they should have done well under the conditions to which they were subjected. By the same token, the sons and daughters of God, chosen and set apart to be a covenant people established to bless the rest of mankind, should have conducted themselves far better than they typically did.

5.4.28—*prune*—Certainly the first parts of the tree to go would be the dead branches, those which had no life at all. This would open up the tree to light and rain, giving room for the new green growth to blossom forth.

5.4.31—*dig*—To loosen the soil around the roots of a tree allows rain or irrigation water to soak into a soil that had been hardened and made imperious over the years.

5.4.35—*nourish*—This would require the use of fertilizers of some kind, probably animal dung and lime, or other minerals favorable to the growth and fruitfulness of the tree.

5.4.46—*branches*—Having been rid of the deadwood, the living branches would begin to put forth new shoots. Anyone familiar with olive trees, however, would also suggest that a great number of shoots from the roots, or “suckers” would also spring forth from the base of the tree.

5.5 The master of the vineyard is no fool; he knows precisely what he is about. He cannot, however, force the tree to respond as he wills it; the tree must cooperate with the treatment as well. The perversity of the tree seems inexplicable, just as the conduct of the children of God seems to defy reason.

5.6 After the great pruning had taken place, all that remained were the branches that still had life in them. Notwithstanding the labor performed, the more lofty portions of the tree began to fall into death and decay just as other portions of the tree had done. Where were these young and tender branches springing forth? Certainly not at the top of the tree. These were branches that

I will liken thee, O house of Israel, like unto a tame olive-tree, which a man took and nourished in his vineyard; and it grew, and waxed old, and began to decay.

DNTC 2:288

4 And it came to pass that the master of the vineyard went forth, and he saw that his olive-tree began to decay; and he said: I will prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it, that perhaps it may shoot forth young and tender branches, and it perish not.

Jacob 5:4–5
EM 1:31
Jacob 5:4,16, 30
EM 2:708

5 And it came to pass that he pruned it, and digged about it, and nourished it according to his word.

6 And it came to pass that after many days it began to put forth somewhat a little, young and tender branches; but behold, the main top thereof began to perish.

Jacob 5:6–14
EM 1:31

were drawing strength because of their position closer to the roots of the tree.

5.7 What constitutes the fundamental differences between the tame and the wild olive trees? Certainly they are not based completely on genetics or the grafts would have been rejected out of hand by the original tree. If the tame olive tree represents the House of Israel, who then does the wild olive tree represent? The answer must be obvious. They are the Gentiles, those not of the covenant people. What, then, are the fundamental differences between the covenant people and the gentile nations? Are they solely genetic? Apparently not, for all who dwell upon the earth are here at the behest of the same Heavenly Father. What the Allegory will demonstrate is that the Gentiles are just as capable of producing good fruit as are the covenant people once they have been given the opportunity to draw strength from the same roots. We need not go into the niceties of fruit tree grafting in order to understand what is transpiring here. This art has been in place in human culture for thousands of years and should be accepted as a given. Those parts of the tame tree which are spreading disease and decay have to be excised, and healthy branches from the well, though wild, tree are to replace them by grafting.

5.7.71—*burned*—This, of course, effectively eliminates the possibility of any further direct contamination.

5.8 The young and tender branches which had sprung up after all of the attention had been poured out upon the dying tame tree provided an opportunity to invest other trees with good fruit, whether through grafting or transplanting.

5.8.12—*many*—We cannot be certain as to the number, although three or four will be discussed later in the allegory.

5.8.22—*graft*—In what manner this transpired and if other wild trees were involved, we may only guess. It is clear, however, that “grafting” may include “planting”, perhaps suggesting that some of the young and tender branches had come up directly from the roots of the original tree (see 5.21–25).

5.9 The servant of the master of the vineyard is charged with the responsibility to graft in the wild branches while the master himself dealt with the dead and dying branches, including the burning thereof. How many servants have been sent into the world to retrieve living branches from the wild olive trees that they might partake of the nourishment from the roots of the tame olive tree? Many hundreds of thousands.

5.10 It is tempting to point to the Greeks and the Romans as the most obvious wild olive trees from which the Lord was able to graft in vibrant branches by which the covenants of the faithful might be perpetuated. In that case, we might point to the early Apostles as being a manifestation of the archetypal servant who was tasked to bring those branches to the tame tree. Yet what may we say of the various peoples who brought life and vitality to the House of Israel at a time when the covenant people were struggling to establish and to maintain their spiritual worth to the Kingdom of God. We may speak of Asenath and Zipporah, the faithful wives of Joseph and Moses, who did not pertain to Israel. The same may be said of Rahab and Ruth, a Canaanite and a Moabite, who figure prominently in the ancestry of David and Jesus

7 And it came to pass that the master of the vineyard saw it, and he said unto his servant: It grieveth me that I should lose this tree; wherefore, go and pluck the branches from a wild olive-tree, and bring them hither unto me; and we will pluck off those main branches which are beginning to wither away, and we will cast them into the fire that they may be burned.

8 And behold, saith the Lord of the vineyard, I *take away many of these young and tender branches, and I will graft them whithersoever I will; and it mattereth not that if it so be that the root of this tree will perish, I may preserve the fruit thereof unto myself; wherefore, I will take these young and tender branches, and I will graft them whithersoever I will.

9 Take thou the branches of the wild olive-tree, and graft them in, in the stead thereof; and these which I have plucked off I will cast into the fire and burn them, that they may not cumber the ground of my vineyard.

{~~9~~—1830}

10 And it came to pass that the servant of the Lord of the vineyard did according to the word of the Lord of the vineyard, and grafted in the branches of the wild olive-tree.

Jacob 5:7
DNTC 2:288
Jacob 5:7–9
AGQ 4:40

* p. 132

of Nazareth. Did not the vassals of the Assyrians who were brought in to rule the remnants of the northern Kingdom of Israel spiritually benefit from the deep-rooted traditions of the people who remained upon the land? Were there not spiritual beneficiaries among the conquering nations that rampaged across the Middle East as they came into contact with the truths that had been revealed by Israel's prophets? Before the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Meridian of Time, there were clear converts to Judaism among the Greeks and Romans who had been brought to Palestine for military, political, and economic reasons. Paul's labors among the Greeks and the Romans do not constitute the sole effort on the part of the servants of God to bring the honest in heart into the Kingdom of God notwithstanding their ethnic heritage.

5.11 For the sake of the roots, for the sake of those with whom the God of Heaven had established His eternal covenant, the Lord was willing to go to extremes in order to keep the promises that He had made to His servants. The great Patriarchs would have posterity, both physically and spiritually, as a result of the labors performed on the tame olive tree.

5.11.7—*caused*—It would appear by the grammatical structure of this sentence that the master of the vineyard assigned some of these tasks to the servant as well.

5.12 The servant would nourish the tame olive tree, just as the prophets, seers, and revelators of God taught and encouraged the House of Israel in all of its trials and tribulations.

5.13 The master of the vineyard wished to preserve the tame tree, especially the roots thereof. For this intent he set about performing a great labor upon the tree that it might be revived. At the same time he proposed to establish other trees in other parts of his vineyard that were of the same nursery stock. If as we have supposed, that the young and tender branches spoken of were taken from the base of the tame tree, the scions all partook of the roots as well as the substance of the tree, suggesting to the reader's mind that those carried away by the hand of the Lord were given renewed covenants, similar to those established among the ancient faithful. This can clearly be seen in the manner in which the Lord worked with Lehi and Nephi.

5.13.2—*these*—In reference to the young and tender branches that had appeared once the old tree had been stimulated by the labors of the master of the vineyard.

5.13.8—*nethermost*—The literal meaning of the English word "nethermost" derives from Germanic roots which mean "lowest". The servant will later tacitly complain about the inconvenient location of these trees because of the labor required to haul the harvest up the hill to the storehouse (see 5.21)

5.13.20—*thee*—That is to say, the master of the vineyard was going to accomplish something about which his servant would know little or nothing initially. Jesus would himself testify that his disciples in the land of Palestine had, at that time, no knowledge of the existence of the Nephites in the land of the Americas (see 3 *NE-C 15.12-15*).

5.14 There is an obvious difference between those portions of the tame olive tree which are pruned away and burned and those which are taken and

11 And the Lord of the vineyard caused that it should be digged about, and pruned, and nourished, saying unto his servant: It grieveth me that I should lose this tree; wherefore, that perhaps I might preserve the roots thereof that they perish not, that I might preserve them unto myself, I have done this thing.

12 Wherefore, go thy way; watch the tree, and nourish it, according to my words.

13 And these will I place in the nethermost part of my vineyard, whithersoever I will, it mattereth not unto thee; and I do it that I may preserve unto myself the natural branches of the tree; and also, that I may lay up fruit thereof against the season, unto myself; for it grieveth me that I should lose this tree and the fruit thereof.

{*¶—1830*}

14 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard went his way,

Jacob 5:14
AGQ 4:40

planted elsewhere. Those Israelites who were slaughtered in the various military campaigns in Palestine seem to be the most likely candidates for those who were cast into the conflagration. As a general principle this may suffice, but the difficulty lies in suggesting that every individual run through by a Babylonian sword was already spiritually dead. The second problem associated with the imagery has to do with the notion of being led away and planted elsewhere. Lehi and his family were taken from Jerusalem and led into the wilderness and from thence to a promised land in which they had no more direct contact with the rest of the Israelite world. The same might be said of portions of the northern tribes of Israel who were led away into the northern countries from which, as a body, they are yet to return. What is left to question are groups like the Jews who were carried away as part of the Babylonian Captivity. Had they been pruned? Had they been transplanted? Did their return seventy years later constitute a retransplant? What we have to keep in mind is that Zenos does not account for every eventuality possible in the history of Israel. He is making a point regarding the salvation of a people who had once rejected the fullness of the Gospel of Christ and how that people could ever be restored to potential redemption. Metaphorically speaking, Zenos is using the general course of a river to tell his story rather than recounting the activity of every molecule of water in the river. In general there are portions of the House of Israel who are destroyed because they no longer are making a viable contribution to the spiritual life of the people. There are other portions who are strengthened and nourished in a variety of ways as designated by the Lord in order that their mutually dependant relationship with their ancestors might become clear. And there are certain portions of Israel that are led away in order to establish completely new covenant peoples, related, but separate and distinct.

5.15 What are we to understand by the long passage of time between the first labors performed on the tame olive tree and the subsequent inspection? Should we affix some number of months or years in order to establish a chronological pattern? It is unlikely that such a course would prove helpful. What is suggested is that a sufficient period of time had passed so that the master of the vineyard and his servant could readily observe whether their labors had been beneficial. The grafts would have had time to heal and become productive; the scions would have been given time to grow into mature trees capable of bearing fruit. What else is implied is the patient understanding that the master of the vineyard had regarding the processes he had initiated in his vineyard. He was willing to wait.

5.16 We should probably sense a little bit of excitement in the voice of the servant. Inasmuch as the servant had been given the direct responsibility of grafting in the branches from the wild olive tree; it must have been gratifying for him to realize that what he had been about actually worked. While the master of the vineyard may have witnessed for himself at some point that such grafting would prove effective, the servant had done his labor as an act of faith. When the time came to restore the natural branches to the mother tree and to do other grafting of one sort or another, the servant would be entrusted with the task of leading and guiding the efforts of other servants who had been called into the vineyard (see 5.70–74)

5.17 The master of the vineyard had been focused on the preservation of the roots of the old tree and that the tree itself would be productive as it had been in the past. He had known and understood the liabilities associated with graft-

and hid the natural branches of the tame olive-tree in the nethermost parts of the vineyard, some in one and some in another, according to his will and pleasure.

15 And it came to pass that a long time passed away, and the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: Come, let us go down into the vineyard, that we may labor in the vineyard.

{9—1830}

16 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard, and also the servant, went down into the vineyard to labor. And it came to pass that the servant said unto his master: Behold, look here; behold the tree.

17 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard looked and beheld the tree in the which the

Jacob 5:15–28
EM 1:31

Jacob 5:17
AGQ 4:40
Jacob 5:17–18

ing in the wild olive branches to his tame tree; having the tree respond positively pleased the master gardener.

5.18 The key to success in this matter had to do with the strength of the roots upon which the grafts from the wild tree had depended. The grafts were new to the tree, but immediately sensed the profound resources which were sustaining them. The wild branches accepted all that the roots could provide and became themselves, for all practical purposes, tame branches. In a real way, the branches had been “adopted” by the mother tree and they in turn “adapted” themselves completely to the nature of the roots. The wild branches became as if they had been naturally produced by the tame tree. To use the Apostle Paul’s terminology, the wild branches were “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God”. The wild branches drew their strength from the power of the roots and were literally converted from their wild nature; the Gentile members of the primitive Church of Christ were built upon the “foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone”. Thus, that which once had been unprofitable became profitable in every way.

5.19 The servant’s labors had at first been limited to the original tree. The master of the vineyard had taken the direct responsibility to plant the scions in the nethermost parts of the vineyard. Now the master of the vineyard was expanding the responsibilities of his servant, increasing his sphere of action to embrace a larger portion of the vineyard. This pattern will continue throughout the allegory.

5.20 The purpose of an olive tree is to bring forth olives, fruit that can be stored for use in less prosperous times. A horticulturalist’s wealth and well-being depend upon the fecundity of his orchards. With bountiful harvests he is able to provide for his family, expand the area of his productivity, employ greater numbers of servants, thus contributing to the overall economy of his community. Perhaps it is bootless to attempt to identify specific aspects of the labors of our Heavenly Father and His servants with the imagery of the Allegory of Zenos. Yet we know that the work and the glory of the Father and the Son is to bring about the immortality and eternal life of man, His own spirit children. All that He does is designed to preserve and to edify His own posterity. The House of Israel has been one of His great works, a people separated from among the children of men, tamed as it were, and cultivated to produce good fruit. The visible fruits of righteousness, the natural spiritual nourishment which righteousness provides, peace, prosperity, and happiness, are desirable, attractive in every way. Healthy trees provide life, and in many instances are metaphorically used to illustrate the provision of eternal life. Lehi’s Tree appears as a similitude of Jesus Christ. The fruit on its branches constitutes eternal life, a product of his great love for humanity. We may be safe in assuming that something of this same interpretive imagery is utilized in

wild olive branches had been grafted; and it had sprung forth and begun to bear fruit. And he beheld that it was good; and the fruit thereof was like unto the natural fruit.

18 And he said unto the servant: Behold, the branches of the wild tree have taken hold of the moisture of the root thereof, that the root thereof hath brought forth much strength; and because of the much strength of the root thereof the wild *branches have brought forth tame fruit. Now, if we had not grafted in these branches, the tree thereof would have perished. And now, behold, I shall lay up much fruit, which the tree thereof hath brought forth; and the fruit thereof I shall lay up against the season, unto mine own self.

{~~9~~—1830}

19 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Come, let us go to the nethermost part of the vineyard, and behold if the natural branches of the tree have not brought forth much fruit also, that I may lay up of the fruit thereof against the season, unto mine own self.

20 And it came to pass that they went forth whither the master had hid the natural branches of the tree, and he said unto the servant: Behold these; and he beheld the first that it had brought forth much fruit; and he beheld also that it was good. And he said unto the servant: Take of the fruit thereof, and lay it up against the season, that I may preserve it unto mine own self; for behold, said he, this long time have I nourished it, and it hath brought forth much fruit.

DNTC 2:288

* p. 133

the Allegory of Zenos, that it too was to provide “eternal life” for all those who would come to the tree and partake. The wretched condition of the tree, together with the bitterness of the fruit, made the tame tree a distressing eyesore in every way. Who in the world would even consider sitting in the shade of such a tree, much less partake of the fruit thereof? Thus the salvation of the tame tree was an imperative to the master of the vineyard.

5.21 The surprise of the servant is understandable. His experience in the vineyard up to this point has been in the “loftiest” part of the orchard. The fact that the tame tree had seemed to fade in a winsome environment seemed to suggest to the servant that growing healthy trees was iffy at best. The planting of one of the scions from the tame tree in a poor piece of ground seemed counterintuitive to the inexperienced servant.

5.22 The master’s reply to the servant seems a bit abrupt, but the servant clearly deserves the rebuke. Whatever the condition of the soil, the master’s choice has been particularly successful. The fact that this nethermost part of the vineyard appeared to be an unlikely place to produce a goodly harvest was irrelevant. The skills of the master of the vineyard were equal to the task. Without becoming too cynical, we might ask what the real complaint of the servant was. Certainly the harvest itself was sufficient to justify the wisdom of the master of the vineyard. When we consider that it was to be the responsibility of the servant to gather up the harvest and then to lug every aspect of the bounty up the hill from the “nethermost”, or lowest part of the vineyard, to the storehouse, we may easily perceive the complaint. It was as if the servant had said something to the effect, “Could you not have planted this tree in a more convenient place?” The master of the vineyard essentially says in reply, “I know that its location is inconvenient, but there is wisdom I what I have done. The fruit still needs to be taken to the storehouse”.

5.23 The second scion had been planted in soil that was less fertile than the first. It apparently was also even less convenient insofar as its proximity to the storehouse was concerned. The servant was told in no uncertain terms that his complaints would have no effect on the nature of the task that lie ahead of him. The fruit would still need to be picked, packaged, and carted up the hill to the storehouse. Again, the wisdom of the master of the vineyard is justified by the productivity of the tree that he had planted. In both cases, those of the first and second branches, the master had been diligent in nourishing the two trees as they grew in their respective wastelands. It had been just as much of an inconvenience for the master to care for these trees as it would be for the servant to gather in the harvest. These extended labors were unimportant when compared to the bounteous harvest itself.

5.24 Here the Lord points out a third branch that has also developed into a fruitful tree. We are not told whether the soil for the third scion was fertile or poor unless the branch referred to in the next verse is the same as the one here. This branch had been nourished like unto the previous two and had been productive to a degree.

5.25 Some scholars have seen a fourth branch in this verse, rather than a

{¶—1830}

21 And it came to pass that the servant said unto his master: How comest thou hither to plant this tree, or this branch of the tree? For behold, it was the poorest spot in all the land of thy vineyard.

22 And the Lord of the vineyard said unto him: Counsel me not; I knew that it was a poor spot of ground; wherefore, I said unto thee, I have nourished it this long time, and thou beholdest that it hath brought forth much fruit.

{¶—1830}

23 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: Look hither; behold I have planted another branch of the tree also; and thou knowest that this spot of ground was poorer than the first. But, behold the tree. I have nourished it this long time, and it hath brought forth much fruit; therefore, gather it, and lay it up against the season, that I may preserve it unto mine own self.

{¶—1830}

24 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said again unto his servant: Look hither, and behold another branch also, which I have planted; behold that I have nourished it also, and it hath brought forth fruit.

25 And he said unto the servant:

second reference to the third scion identified in the previous verse. Rather significant arguments may be made for either view, but the three-branch theory is far more compelling inasmuch as in the subsequent visits to the nethermost parts of the vineyard where the branches had been planted only three trees will be discussed. Since the loss of any one of these little plantings would have been considered a great tragedy to the master of the vineyard, it would be odd if an entire tree had died and no mention was made of it in the subsequent narrative. It is tempting at this point to identify both the location and the civilization represented by this third branch. The division of Lehi's family into the Lamanites and the Nephites appears to be reflected perfectly in the depiction of the half-tame, half-wild nature of the last tree. There can be no question that the imagery works, and no doubt the Nephite prophets perceived their people as the objects of this prophetic vision of Zenos, just as they saw themselves in the writings of Isaiah. However, to assert that the reference is exclusively to the children of Lehi is to limit the allegory in an untoward way. No doubt there have been other remnants of the House of Israel who have been led away by the Lord and, though nourished by Him, fragmented into righteous and wicked peoples. That the wicked portions could have also overpowered the righteous as in the case of the Lamanites and Nephites does not unduly stretch the imagination. The posterity of Mulek certainly falls into this category and, in the deep past, the Jaredites would qualify as well, at least in general terms.

5.25.20—*good*—Not only “good”, but choice above all other places in the vineyard (see 5.43.

5.26 One wonders at this command given by the Lord of the vineyard. Was there really a serious intent to destroy the branches producing the vile fruit? Or was this a rhetorical command, one designed to evoke the precise response that the servant gives? We may see similar exchanges between Moses and the Lord God of Israel while the former dealt with the recalcitrant Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai. It is interesting to note that prior to this moment, the master of the vineyard has taken the responsibility to prune the trees and to cast the unprofitable branches into the fire. Here the servant is now tasked to do the same.

5.27 The servant has by now embraced much of the approach of the master of the vineyard. He has witnessed the great success that the Lord of the vineyard had achieved with the tame tree. He had been instrumental in nourishing and digging about that tree and was willing to perform the same labors upon another tree, notwithstanding its inconvenient location in the nethermost parts of the vineyard. The servant has become somewhat invested in his labor and perceives how he might be a blessing and a benefit to his Lord.

5.28 The servant has been taken into full confidence by the master of the vineyard and instead of having disparate assignments in different parts of the vineyard, they labor in concert one with another.

5.29 How long a time had actually passed? It is impossible to say with any certainty. Those who would constrain certain parts of the allegory as having a solitary application to the Lamanites and the Nephites would respond that approximately a thousand years had passed from the time that the Lamanites

Look hither and behold the last. Behold, this have I planted in a good spot of ground; and I have nourished it this long time, and only a part of the tree hath brought forth tame fruit, and the other part of the tree hath brought forth wild fruit; behold, I have nourished this tree like unto the others.

{*¶*—1830}

26 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said *unto the servant: Pluck off the branches that have not brought forth good fruit, and cast them into the fire.

* p. 134

27 But behold, the servant said unto him: Let us prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it a little longer, that perhaps it may bring forth good fruit unto thee, that thou canst lay it up against the season.

28 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard and the servant of the Lord of the vineyard did nourish all the fruit of the vineyard.

{*¶*—1830}

29 And it came to pass that a long time had passed away, and the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: Come, let us go down into the

Jacob 5:29–73
EM 1:32

and Nephites had divided into their respective parties and the final destruction of the Nephites that transpired on the Hill Cumorah in the fourth century AD. We ought to be open, however, to the possibility that other peoples may be being referenced by Zenos in his narrative as well as the children of Lehi. Again, the allegory is designed to help us see patterns of conduct on the part of the Lord, His servants, and His people in the context of the proposed salvation of mankind.

5.30 While the graftings had taken hold of the strength of the roots and had prospered, producing great amounts of good fruit for the master of the vineyard, yet in the process of time the branches from the wild olive tree began to revert to their natural uncultivated state. One is at odds to decide which of the conditions was worse. The dying tree was unproductive, but the revitalized tree was producing worthless fruit. The effect on the overall prosperity of the vineyard was essentially the same.

5.30.48—*cumber*—The English word “cumber” derives from roots which mean “distress, grief, arrest, trouble, crowd, embarrass, distract, vexatious, prevent, hinder”. One obsolete usage means to “destroy utterly”.

5.31 It would appear that the various forms of fruit presented a momentary conundrum for the master of the vineyard. Which of all of these fruits would be acceptable? Which would contribute to his storehouse? Which would nourish and bless those of his household? Which would bring health and strength to the world of men? For all of his testing and tasting, he discovered that none of the fruit, from the top to the bottom of the tree, was good for anything but to be cast out and trodden under the foot of men.

5.32 How disappointing it would have been to have enjoyed success with the original tree, particularly when the grafting seemed to be so profitable at the first, to find that for all of the labor that had been performed, it had degenerated into something useless and unproductive. The tree was not dying, but it was hardly more than a decoration in his vineyard. The purpose for which it had been planted and preserved was not being fulfilled.

5.33 The master of the vineyard is again asking a rhetorical question, but he queries the servant in order to help the servant clarify and understand his own thinking on the matter. Should the tree be cut down? Is all lost? Can the roots again provide what is necessary to produce good fruit upon the tree?

5.34 The servant is quick to observe that the grafting in of the branches from the wild olive tree did save the life of the tame olive tree. Had the labors not been performed, surely the tree would have died together with those roots. The reciprocal relationship between the roots and the branches have benefited the roots and preserved them. The original covenants which established the House of Israel were still in place and could yet become effective. The traditions and philosophies of men had overwhelmed and misconstrued the principles of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ so that notion and practice of righteousness had become corrupted.

vineyard, that we may labor again in the vineyard. For behold, the time draweth near, and the end soon cometh; wherefore, I must lay up fruit against the season, unto mine own self.

{*¶*—1830}

30 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard and the servant went down into the vineyard; and they came to the tree whose natural branches had been broken off, and the wild branches had been grafted in; and behold all sorts of fruit did cumber the tree.

{*¶*—1830}

31 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard did taste of the fruit, every sort according to its number. And the Lord of the vineyard said: Behold, this long time have we nourished this tree, and I have laid up unto myself against the season much fruit.

32 But behold, this time it hath brought forth much fruit, and there is none of it which is good. And behold, there are all kinds of bad fruit; and it profiteth me nothing, notwithstanding all our labor; and now it grieveth me that I should lose this tree.

33 And the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: What shall we do unto the tree, that I may preserve again good fruit thereof unto mine own self?

34 And the servant said unto his master: Behold, because thou didst graft in the branches of the wild olive-tree they have nourished the roots, that they are alive and they have not perished; wherefore thou beholdest that they are yet good.

{*¶*—1830}

5.35 The master of the vineyard reminds his servant that the roots are not the place where the fruit appears; it is in the branches. If something cannot be done to strengthen the roots sufficiently to overpower the wildness of the branches from the wild olive tree, then the tame olive tree will continue to produce nothing but worthless fruit.

5.36 The covenants of ancient Israel were still in force. How could their power and effectiveness be manifested again in the righteousness of men? Now that the roots had been preserved, and after so much good fruit had been generated, what could be done to restore the tame olive tree to full productivity?

5.37 Notwithstanding the general genetic compatibility between the tame and wild olive trees, the wild branches were different. Those societies that were adopted into the House of Israel through the ministry of the Lord's servants had brought a great deal of philosophical and social baggage with them. In the beginning, when the grafting first took hold, the power of the covenants held those disparate, worldly elements in check. As the branches strengthened and grew, their influence over the entire body of the tree became apparent. One might easily point to the Hellenization of the Jews during the centuries before the birth of Jesus Christ as a classic example of this effect. So long as the entire tree was drawing strength from the roots of the tree and not one branch drawing from another, the tree prospered and produced good fruit. The corruption came as the graftings were treated with greater priority. Thus the traditions of men outside of the covenants began to overwhelm and to destroy the House of Israel.

5.38 The corruption of the other trees, those located in the nethermost parts of the vineyard, did not derive from the same source as the mother tree. As far as the narrative of the allegory is concerned, the young and tender branches had not been grafted into some existing tree, but transplanted from the mother tree into the soil in those other parts of the vineyard. Although the causes of the corruption may have been different, yet the result was the same. Nowhere in the vineyard was there an olive tree that was producing acceptable fruit.

5.39 Those who may have proposed that there were as many as four scions planted in the nethermost parts of the vineyard as a result of their reading of the earlier verses, are confronted here with the fact that the master of the vineyard and his servant are only dealing with three trees in this place. Having said this, let not the reader suppose that there have only been three scions of the House of Israel led away into other lands from Palestine. The three given by Zenos are representative of the whole which itself has remained numberless.

5.40 The last tree, that which is usually identified with the posterity of father Lehi, suffered uniquely. That tree, however, stilled lived, just as the other three, and was susceptible to restoration.

35 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: The tree profiteth me nothing, and the roots thereof profit me nothing so long as it shall bring forth evil fruit.

36 Nevertheless, I know that the roots are good, and for mine own purpose I have preserved them; and because of their much strength they have hitherto brought forth, from the wild branches, good fruit.

37 But behold, the wild branches have grown and have overrun the roots thereof; and because that the wild branches have overcome the roots thereof it hath brought forth much evil fruit; and because that it hath brought forth so much evil fruit thou beholdest that it beginneth to perish; and it will soon become ripened, that it may be cast into the fire, except we should do something for it to preserve it.

{*¶*—1830}

38 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: Let us go down into the nethermost parts of the vineyard, and behold if the natural branches have also brought forth evil fruit.

39 And it came to pass that they went down into the nethermost parts of the vineyard. And it came to pass that they beheld that the fruit of the natural branches had become corrupt also; yea, the first and the second and also the last; and they had all become corrupt.

40 And the wild fruit of the last had overcome that part of the tree which brought forth good fruit, even that the branch had withered away and died.

{*¶*—1830}

* p. 135

Jacob 5:38–75
EM 2:708

Jacob 5:39–48
EM 1:57

5.41 A legitimate question, the answer to which is, “Nothing more”. The master of the vineyard had done all within his power to strengthen and preserve the four olive trees. Those concerns which he did not address directly he wisely instructed his servants to attend to.

5.42 The fruitfulness of the olive trees had not been completely dependent upon the soil or any other aspect of the environment inasmuch as at some point they all produced good fruit. The horticultural care taken by the master of the vineyard and his servant had been superb. Wherein lay the problems that afflicted the trees so that they did not produce or produced unusable fruit? The roots of the mother tree were fine, but the upper branches on the tame olive tree began to die, perhaps because of the distance separating those branches from the roots; that is to say, the branches grew to an altitude beyond which the roots could not provide nourishment. Pride, vanity, self-aggrandizement, willful independence, all of these contributed to the disasters that frequently befell the House of Israel. Later, the wildness of the grafted branches influenced the rest of the tree, as if the natural branches were drawing strength from the wild branches rather than from the roots. We cannot easily discern why the young and tender branches that had been planted in the nethermost parts of the vineyard eventually became corrupted. The master of the vineyard was astonished himself.

5.43 The corruption of the tame tree could be accounted for to a certain degree, and the first two of the three trees planted in the nethermost parts of the vineyard could have suffered because of their location. The third tree, however, had been planted in the very best parcel of land that the master of the vineyard owned. If the environment determined the fecundity of the trees, why did this last tree not do extremely well all of the time? It is almost as if the trees had deliberately chosen to produce bad fruit, rebelling against their very nature as olive trees.

5.44 Certainly from the point of view of the Nephites, the tree that had been planted before them in the same part of the vineyard may be identified as the Jaredites. There are other examples of the previous inhabitants of a land being removed or destroyed so that a covenant people might inherit a place given to them by the God of Heaven. The destruction of the Canaanites before the House of Israel being the one most familiar.

5.45 Is this a recrimination against the servant? After all it was his idea that the wide side of the tree be preserved and nurtured (see 5.26–27). Not hardly. The master of the vineyard takes full responsibility for what has transpired.

5.46 The personal investment of the Lord of the vineyard has been enormous, performing his labors for and in behalf of the trees that they might be productive, yet they were hardly more than vertical kindling.

41 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard wept, and said unto the servant: What could I have done more for my vineyard?

42 Behold, I knew that all the fruit of the vineyard, save it were these, had become corrupted. And now these which have once brought forth good fruit have also become corrupted; and now all the trees of my vineyard are good for nothing save it be to be hewn down and cast into the fire.

43 And behold this last, whose branch hath withered away, I did plant in a good spot of ground; yea, even that which was choice unto me above all other parts of the land of my vineyard.

44 And thou beheldest that I also cut down that which cumbered this spot of ground, that I might plant this tree in the stead thereof.

45 And thou beheldest that a part thereof brought forth good fruit, and a part thereof brought forth wild fruit; and because I plucked not the branches thereof and cast them into the fire, behold, they have overcome the good branch that it hath withered away.

46 And now, behold, notwithstanding all the care which we have taken of my vineyard, the trees thereof have become corrupted, that they bring forth no good fruit; and these I had hoped to preserve, to have laid up fruit thereof against the

5.47 For the first time the master of the vineyard suspects that an enemy has somehow corrupted his vineyard. How this might have been accomplished is left to speculation, but it is redolent of the parable of the Wheat and the Tares that the Savior gives to his disciples to help them to understand the discouraging aspects of governing the Kingdom of God on the earth. Jesus first told the parable of the Sower regarding the four kinds of soil or the kinds of hearts that the word would be sown into. Each of the different soils determined the degree to which the planting was fruitful (see *MT-C 13.3–8* and *MT-C 13.18–23*) and the nature of the harvest was not dependant upon the original worth of the seed. In the parable of the Wheat and the Tares, Jesus informs his disciples that they will have proactive enemies who will maliciously hinder their work in the ministry (see *MT-C 13.24–30*). Not only do the tares inexplicable appear in the field with the wheat, the servants are told that they would have to wait for the harvest before they could effectively separate the wheat from the tares because they had become too much intertwined in the roots. We may assume that the master of the vineyard was on the horns of the same dilemma. Removing the branches that bore bad fruit would have been too much for the tree to take, the pruning too severe. By the same token, by leaving the two portions of the tree in place would eventually bring about the corruption of the entire tree. Notwithstanding the corruption of the entire vineyard, the trees, roots and all, still lived.

5.48 At the heart of the whole matter is the presence of a pride which the covenants of God cannot and will not support.

5.48.17—*loftiness*—This is most likely in reference to the abundant growth of the branches of the trees. The dying upper branches of the original tree and the wildness of the fruit seem to be the result of this “loftiness”. Certainly this is clearly the case with the three young and tender branches that had been planted in the nethermost parts of the vineyard. The master of the vineyard had expended a great deal of time and effort in nourishing the tree, especially those which had been planted in the “poorest” parts of the vineyard. The third tree had been planted in the richest soil available. The foliage, thus supplied with plenty of nutrients, grew astonishingly, so much so that their still young roots could not supply the branches with the strength that they desired. Notwithstanding the age of the mother tree, the strength and depth of her roots, the foliage also grew unabated and eventually could not be supported by the roots.

5.49 A radical solution indeed! This is somewhat reminiscent of the response of the Lord God of Israel at the time when the Israelites sought to stone Joshua and Caleb when their minority report on the land of Canaan was rejected. Jehovah said to His servant Moses, “I will smite them with a pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they”. Moses’ reply was that there were covenants in place which, if rejected even because of the wickedness of the people, would allow the nations of the earth to mock the true and everlasting God of Heaven. One can hear

season, unto mine own self. But, behold, they have become like unto the wild olive-tree, and they are of no worth but to be hewn down and cast into the fire; and it grieveth me that I should lose them.

47 But what could I have done more in my vineyard? Have I slackened mine hand, that I have not nourished it? Nay, I have nourished it, and I have digged about it, and I have *pruned it, and I have dunged it; and I have stretched forth mine hand almost all the day long, and the end draweth nigh. And it grieveth me that I should hew down all the trees of my vineyard, and cast them into the fire that they should be burned. Who is it that has corrupted my vineyard?

{*¶—1830*}

48 And it came to pass that the servant said unto his master: Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard—have not the branches thereof overcome the roots which are good? And because the branches have overcome the roots thereof, behold they grew faster than the strength of the roots, taking strength unto themselves. Behold, I say, is not this the cause that the trees of thy vineyard have become corrupted?

{*¶—1830*}

49 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Let us go to and hew down the trees of the vineyard and cast them into the fire, that they shall not cumber the ground of my vineyard, for I have done all. What could I have done more for my

Jacob 5:47
CR91-O 41

* p. 136

Jacob 5:49–54
AGQ 4:205

the tone of voice of the servant of the master of the vineyard in the pleadings of Moses in Numbers 14. Interestingly enough, Moses had previously thought that the destruction of the entire people was probably a pretty good idea, given their rebelliousness. Everyone in the scriptures seems to be on one learning curve or another.

5.50 The servant's investment in the vineyard has been great enough that even though he was a servant, he was willing to persuasively assert his views with his master.

5.51 It is likely that the master of the vineyard wished to test his servant prior to putting him in charge of the other servants that would be engaged in the last great attempt to make the vineyard productive. This would explain in part why the Lord of the vineyard seemed to be so easily persuaded.

5.52 Taking the branches from the three trees planted in the nethermost parts of the vineyard and regrafting them back into the mother tree, the original olive tree from whence the young and tender branches had been removed, should be understood as a metaphorical representation of the gathering of the House of Israel in the latter days. Any corruption caused by the grafting in of the branches from the wild olive tree would then be obviated. The natural branches would then replace the branches whose fruit had been the most bitter, presumably whether wild or tame.

5.53 Again, the overriding concern is the preservation of the roots of the original olive tree, the covenants made with the ancient patriarchs of Israel.

5.54 The original tree had been preserved by grafting in branches from a wild olive tree, that the roots might be preserved. Here also a similar technique is used in order to preserve the roots of the three trees in the nethermost parts of the vineyard. The difference in effect would be that the branches that would be grafted in to the nethermost trees would not be as wild as the ones used with the mother tree because they had been tempered somewhat by the roots of that tree. The object of the project was to strengthen the roots of the three trees so that they could once again bring forth acceptable fruit. Imagine the surprise of the new branches at having been grafted on to the daughter trees of the tame olive tree. Imagine the surprise of those who have encountered the remnants of the House of Israel that the Lord Himself carried away into every quarter of the world.

5.55 The first step in the process was to take branches from the original tree and take them down the hill into the nethermost parts of the vineyard to the three trees. It is interesting that a goodly portion of the earth had been explored by the Christian nations of the earth before the restoration of the Gospel of Christ and the establishment of the Church and Kingdom of God

vineyard?

50 But, behold, the servant said unto the Lord of the vineyard: Spare it a little longer.

51 And the Lord said: Yea, I will spare it a little longer, for it grieveth me that I should lose the trees of my vineyard.

52 Wherefore, let us take of the branches of these which I have planted in the nethermost parts of my vineyard, and let us graft them into the tree from whence they came; and let us pluck from the tree those branches whose fruit is most bitter, and graft in the natural branches of the tree in the stead thereof.

53 And this will I do that the tree may not perish, that, perhaps, I may preserve unto myself the roots thereof for mine own purpose.

54 And, behold, the roots of the natural branches of the tree which I planted whithersoever I would are yet alive; wherefore, that I may preserve them also for mine own purpose, I will take of the branches of this tree, and I will graft them in unto them. Yea, I will graft in unto them the branches of their mother tree, that I may preserve the roots also unto mine own self, that when they shall be sufficiently strong perhaps they may bring forth good fruit unto me, and I may yet have glory in the fruit of my vineyard.

{~~¶~~—1830}

55 And it came to pass that they took from the natural tree which had become wild, and grafted in unto the natural trees, which also had become wild.

Jacob 5:52
DNTC 2:289

among the children of men. Not until that Kingdom was once more upon the earth could the gathering of Israel begin in earnest.

5.56 As winsome a metaphor for the gathering as might be found in the scriptures. As the Book of Mormon testifies, these things have transpired so that the descendants of the Patriarchs, wherever they may be found, might know the covenants of the Lord and that they are not cut off forever (see *TPW-C 1.6*).

5.57 The destruction of the bitter, or of the wicked, would come in a variety of ways, but here there are three manners given. First, branches would be taken from one tree to another to strengthen and nourish the roots and be nourished and tamed in return. Second, some branches would remain in place, their character changing because of the strengthened roots and their association with the newly grafted in branches. In both cases the bitterness is changed into tame and profitable fruit. In the third instance, some branches are summarily cut off from all further contact with any of the trees and are burned.

5.58 The purification of the four trees would be pedestrian, a constant labor of love whereby the trees are nourished and pruned. From time to time, but not all at once, major branches would be removed and destroyed as the overall health of the tree allowed. Thus, slowly but surely, corrupt notions and doctrines would eventually be eliminated from the among the covenant people until there remained nothing but truth, light, and life.

5.59 The goodness of the roots and the exchange of the branches between the trees are expected to bring the entire vineyard back into full and profitable production.

5.60 The labors of the master of the vineyard are founded in his faith, his confidence in the goodness of the roots and the origins of the various branches, that in the end there will be unity and prosperity in the whole of the vineyard. He is also depending on the trust and confidence that he has expressed in his servant and the servants who will accompany him in the work.

5.61 The work of the ministry is to prepare a way whereby the children of God may attain to immortality and eternal life, which are the greatest gifts that God the Father has to offer His children. Those who accept immortality and eternal life with full purpose of heart bring immeasurable joy into the Celestial realms. Note that the Lord of the vineyard is not an idle master.

56 And they also took of the natural trees which had become wild, and grafted into their mother tree.

57 And the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Pluck not the wild branches from the trees, save it be those *which are most bitter; and in them ye shall graft according to that which I have said.

58 And we will nourish again the trees of the vineyard, and we will trim up the branches thereof; and we will pluck from the trees those branches which are ripened, that must perish, and cast them into the fire.

59 And this I do that, perhaps, the roots thereof may take strength because of their goodness; and because of the change of the branches, that the good may overcome the evil.

60 And because that I have preserved the natural branches and the roots thereof, and that I have grafted in the natural branches again into their mother tree, and have preserved the roots of their mother tree, that, perhaps, the trees of my vineyard may bring forth again good fruit and that I may have joy again in the fruit of my vineyard, and, perhaps, that I may rejoice exceedingly that I have preserved the roots and the branches of the first fruit—

61 Wherefore, go to, and call servants, that we may labor diligently with our might in the vineyard, that we may prepare the way, that I may bring forth again the natural fruit, which natural fruit is good and the most precious above all other fruit.

* p. 137

5.62 Certainly the events referred to here must focus on the last days, prior to the most productive season in the history of this earth and in the history of humanity. We are now in the midst of the preparations for the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the restoration of this earth to its Terrestrial state, and the initiation of the Millennial reign. Can there be any more supernal opportunity then to be counted among those servants of the last days, laboring in the vineyard of the Lord?

5.63 The first branches to be grafted into the mother tree are taken from those trees that had been planted in the nethermost parts of the vineyard. If we are to follow the analogy provided within the context of the allegory, the laborers were to begin with the third tree, that representing, at least for our purposes, the posterity of Lehi. The first formal mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was sent in 1830–31 to Native Americans residing in lands from New York to the Unorganized Indian Territory west of the state of Missouri. No doubt, as all of these prophecies unfold, we will easily discern the fulfillment of each portion of the process commanded by the master of the vineyard. Of course, we are not completely privy to the activities of those servants of the Lord of the vineyard who are diligently performing their labors in other venues.

5.64 As the grafts take hold, the servants of the Lord of the vineyard were to provide room for their growth. Unfruitful limbs and branches would be pruned away to allow the healthy and productive branches to develop naturally, unaffected by the presence of the wild branches. As the Church of Jesus Christ has extended into the world, these prunings have become more frequent and more visible.

5.65 Again, this is a pedestrian process, one calculated to bring prosperity and happiness to the children of men as the sons and daughters of God. As indicated here, the covenants of salvation and exaltation, the roots of the trees as it were, were to be revealed gradually lest any of the grafted in branches be overwhelmed by the power of them.

5.66 Gradually, all of the evil influences that had affected the production of desirable fruit would be done away. The strength of the roots would be balanced by the growth of the branches. As the tame branches became stronger, the wicked among them would be pruned away to provide more room for the righteous. Thus the limbs and branches, the entire shape of the olive tree, would be formed properly, that all of the fruit might be acceptable to the Lord of the vineyard

5.67 The gathering of the House of Israel from its scattered condition will

62 Wherefore, let us go to and labor with our might this last time, for behold the end draweth nigh, and this is for the last time that I shall prune my vineyard.

63 Graft in the branches; begin at the last that they may be first, and that the first may be last, and dig about the trees, both old and young, the first and the last; and the last and the first, that all may be nourished once again for the last time.

64 Wherefore, dig about them, and prune them, and dung them once more, for the last time, for the end draweth nigh. And if it be so that these last grafts shall grow, and bring forth the natural fruit, then shall ye prepare the way for them, that they may grow.

65 And as they begin to grow ye shall clear away the branches which bring forth bitter fruit, according to the strength of the good and the size thereof; and ye shall not clear away the bad thereof all at once, lest the roots thereof should be too strong for the graft, and the graft thereof shall perish, and I lose the trees of my vineyard.

66 For it grieveth me that I should lose the trees of my vineyard; wherefore ye shall clear away the bad according as the good shall grow, that the root and the top may be equal in strength, until the good shall overcome the bad, and the bad be hewn down and cast into the fire, that they cumber not the ground of my vineyard; and thus will I sweep away the bad out of my vineyard.

67 And the branches of the natural

Jacob 5:62
CR83-A 47

Jacob 5:66
CR86-A 3

proceed without hinderment, all of the remnants of the children of Israel being restored to the fullness of the truth that had been delivered to their righteous fathers.

5.68 Jesus taught the same principle to his disciples in Palestine and to the Nephites gathered at the Temple at Bountiful. He was the good shepherd and there were many sheep which were not known to either the flocks in the land of Israel or in the Americas. The Savior testified that there would come a time when there would be but one flock and one fold. The literal fulfillment of this promise lies in the immediate future.

5.69 This would be the last time that the Lord would go to such lengths to preserve the children of men. The short season at the end of the Millennium will present a somewhat starker dénouement.

5.70 How many servants will be required to bring about the full restoration of the House of Israel? How many will be required to bring about the commandments issued by the Lord of the vineyard? The work will always seem to outdistance those who are set to the task. As the availability of servants increases, other portions of the vineyard are opened up for them to accomplish the Lord's will. The tasks will be accomplished in the order that they have been designated. We have every reason to expect that those who pertain to the latter days will be privileged to witness the restoration of the remnants of scattered Israel in every part of the world. We ought not to be surprised when we discover that these peoples have histories which parallel precisely those which have been described by the servants of God. No doubt there will be additional accounts of Israel's dealings with their God that will be made available as the roots and branches of the trees are able to bear them.

5.71 The promise of the master of the vineyard to his servants is that when the season comes, they too will enjoy those blessings laid up in store for their Lord. They will rejoice in the fruits of their own labors.

5.72 Again, the servants and their master work together, the servants receiving their instructions from hour to hour and from day to day, doing only that which the Lord of vineyard commands them. Those with eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts that can comprehend, know precisely what is meant here.

5.72.15—*mights*—An odd plural form of the English word “might”, but one that has had some currency in the past. It means, among other things, “the power, energy, or intensity of which one is capable”, whether speaking of an individual or of a group.

tree will I graft in again into the natural tree;

*68 And the branches of the natural tree will I graft into the natural branches of the tree; and thus will I bring them together again, that they shall bring forth the natural fruit, and they shall be one.

69 And the bad shall be cast away, yea, even out of all the land of my vineyard; for behold, only this once will I prune my vineyard.

{*¶*—1830}

70 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard sent his servant; and the servant went and did as the Lord had commanded him, and brought other servants; and they were few.

71 And the Lord of the vineyard said unto them: Go to, and labor in the vineyard, with your might. For behold, this is the last time that I shall nourish my vineyard; for the end is nigh at hand, and the season speedily cometh; and if ye labor with your might with me ye shall have joy in the fruit which I shall lay up unto myself against the time which will soon come.

{*¶*—1830}

72 And it came to pass that the servants did go and labor with their mights; and the Lord of the vineyard labored also with them; and they did obey the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard in all things.

* p. 138

5.73 Could anything be more explicit? Some of this process is illustrated in the organization of the Church and Kingdom of God on the earth since its restoration. In the beginning of this dispensation there were but six members of the Church of Christ. The organizational needs were few. As the membership of the Church increased, additional officers and callings were revealed. As the organization developed it became clear that this Kingdom would be unlike anything that was in existence at the time. Imperfect notions regarding Church government were slowly but surely pruned away allowing the true principles to replace them. Ultimately there will be a fullness revealed, and the righteousness of perfect government will shine forth, bearing fruit in all nations.

5.74 These days lie yet before us, but the time will come in which all that has been prophesied will come to pass. Those parts of the House of Israel which will not bear the fruits of repentance and righteousness will simply be relieved of any covenants which they might have enjoyed as a result of their genetic relationship to those who had first received the promises of Christ. Those who draw strength from those principles and ordinances of salvation will be purified, sanctified and redeemed from all sin, perfect fruit derived from the truth and light of God the Father and His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.75 The disciples were few, yet successful. They were individuals who came together in a common cause with the master of the vineyard. Because of their devoted unity to each other and to the Lord of the vineyard, they would have blessings immeasurable as their lot in the eternities. The fruit of their labors would bless them forever.

5.75.47—*thou*—One might expect the plural “ye” in this place if the Lord of the vineyard had not been speaking to each of them individually. There are general blessings to be given to the children of men, but the Lord deals with each of His servants according to their specific needs and talents

5.75.75—*beginning*—That is to say, the period of time before the tame olive tree had begun to die, when it was magnificently productive.

5.75.82—*ye*—The plural of the singular “thou”. The Lord of the vineyard commends each individual because of their cooperative spirit, that they have been individuals working together as one. One may make light of this observation because of the frequent usage of one pronoun for the other in unlettered speech, but there is much to be gained by accepting what the prophet was inspired to write.

5.76 Once the trees had been restored to their proper status, there would be a long time during which the trees would leaf, blossom, and bear fruit. We are not told how long, but we ought to assume that a thousand years would pass when nothing but righteousness would be wrought upon the face of the earth. Peace and harmony will reign supreme, disease and other afflictions will have not place among the children of men, children will be raised up into righ-

73 And there began to be the natural fruit again in the vineyard; and the natural branches began to grow and thrive exceedingly; and the wild branches began to be plucked off and to be cast away; and they did keep the root and the top thereof equal, according to the strength thereof.

74 And thus they labored, with all diligence, according to the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard, even until the bad had been cast away out of the vineyard, and the Lord had preserved unto himself that the trees had become again the natural fruit; and they became like unto one body; and the fruits were equal; and the Lord of the vineyard had preserved unto himself the natural fruit, which was most precious unto him from the beginning.

{~~¶~~—1830}

75 And it came to pass that when the Lord of the vineyard saw that his fruit was good, and that his vineyard was no more corrupt, he called up his servants, and said unto them: Behold, for this last time have we nourished my vineyard; and thou beholdest that I have done according to my will; and I have preserved the natural fruit, that it is good, even like as it was in the beginning. And blessed art thou; for because ye have been diligent in laboring with me in my vineyard, and have kept my commandments, and have brought unto me again the natural fruit, that my vineyard is no more corrupted, and the bad is cast away, behold ye shall have joy with me *because of the fruit of my vineyard.

76 For behold, for a long time will I lay up of the fruit of my vineyard unto mine own self against the season, which speedily cometh; and for the last time have I nourished my vineyard, and pruned it, and dug

Jacob 5:73–77
EM 1:32

Jacob 5:75
CR95-O 107

* p. 139

Jacob 5:76
EM 2:708
Jacob 5:76–77
MLM 531

teousness like calves in a stall, and no man or devil will be able to hurt or destroy in all the holy mountain of the Lord.

5.77 After this long era of tranquility and prosperity, the thousand years as we have supposed, there will come again a time of corruption, a short season as it is sometimes called, during which the final separation between things wild and things tame will be made. That which chooses to maintain itself in concert with the will of Heaven, will be drawn into eternal salvation with the God who gave them life; that which chooses to rebel against Him whose right it is to reign, will find itself outside the pale of exaltation. The earth then will be burned, as by fire. This sphere as we know it will die and be resurrected, a glorified habitation for the saints of God, the servants who have faithfully obeyed Him in all things. We may rest assured that there will be further opportunities for those servants to utilize those skills acquired during their ministry in the Lord's vineyard.

6.1 Jacob has prepared himself to bear fervent testimony regarding the Allegory of Zenos. He knows that it is true because of the revelations of Christ with which he has been blessed. Jacob, like Nephi and Lehi before him, have seen in vision the entire history of the Nephite and Lamanite peoples. They knew that the prophecies of Isaiah dealt directly with their posterity and now Jacob testifies that the prophecies of Zenos did the same.

6.1.25—*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.

6.1.26—*Zenos*—The writings of this great prophet were constantly cited by Lehi and Nephi and other Nephite prophets. An 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*). Nephi testified that the prophet knew of the events surrounding the death and burial of the Savior (see *1 NE-C 19.10–17*). Jacob, the brother of Nephi quotes here 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 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.

6.1.32—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been

about it, and dunged it; wherefore I will lay up unto mine own self of the fruit, for a long time, according to that which I have spoken.

77 And when the time cometh that evil fruit shall again come into my vineyard, then will I cause the good and the bad to be gathered; and the good will I preserve unto myself, and the bad will I cast away into its own place. And then cometh the season and the end; and my vineyard will I cause to be burned with fire.

{Chapter IV} (Chapter 6)

{9—1830}

1 AND now, behold, my brethren, as I said unto you that I would prophesy, behold, this is my prophecy—that the things which this prophet Zenos spake, concerning the house of Israel, in the which he likened them unto a tame olive-tree, must surely come to pass.

Jacob 6
AF 320, 327
DNTC 3:293
EM 1:147
Jacob 6:1
MD 454
EM 4:1623
Jacob 6:1–4
EM 1:32

adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

6.2 The first general gathering of the House of Israel took place under the direction of Moses and Aaron as the children of Israel were led out of Egypt after generations of slavery. The second gathering of Israel is to transpire near the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ, at the time of his coming in glory to rule as the Messiah for a thousand years. Jacob instructs his readers that the second gathering is treated in the latter verses of the Allegory of Zenos in which the master of the vineyard pruned his vineyard for the last time with the aid of his servants (see 5.70–77).

6.3 The world, that is to say those who have partaken of the spirit and substance of this fallen world to the point where they no longer hearken to the voice of God, will be separated from among the righteous. This has been illustrated in the Allegory of Zenos when the “most bitter” branches, the “bad” are pruned from the olive trees and are burned. This is the fate of the wicked; they will have no place among the righteous but will spend an enormous amount of time elsewhere.

6.3.5—*they*—That is to say, the servants who participated in the rejuvenation of the vineyard.

6.3.29—*world*—In reference to the wicked, the bitter branches of the olive trees. Although this may be an allusion to the consummation of the earth after the short season when the earth will die and resurrect, it is most likely that Jacob is testifying of the fate of the wicked at the time of the Second Coming.

6.4 Notwithstanding the bitter fruit produced by the various trees representing Israel and its scattered remnants, the Lord of the vineyard was faithful to those original covenants and did all within His power to provide an opportunity for the trees to be viable and productive. If the trees produced evil fruit, it was the choice of the various generations of the House of Israel, those who chose to be stiff-necked and gainsaying.

6.4.15—*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.

6.4.17—*roots*—That is to say, those ancients who by covenant were befriended by the God of Heaven, who received specific promises regarding the salvation of their posterity.

6.4.19—*branches*—The lineal and adopted posterity of the ancient patriarchs as represented by the tame and wild branches.

6.5 The master of the vineyard patiently nurtured his olive trees that they might bring forth acceptable fruit, notwithstanding their inexplicable truculence. The propensity of producing bitter fruit is linked here with the hardening of one’s heart, lack of faith and repentance, and an unwillingness to seek the strength of the Lord through His covenants. Again, this is comparable to refusing to be nourished by the roots of the trees, the place from which the eternal covenants spring.

6.6 Hardening one’s heart is likened unto the refusal to accept certain nutrients which only the roots can provide and likewise to failing to contribute to

2 And the day that he shall set his hand again the second time to recover his people, is the day, yea, even the last time, that the servants of the Lord shall go forth in his power, to nourish and prune his vineyard; and after that the end soon cometh.

3 And how blessed are they who have labored diligently in his vineyard; and how cursed are they who shall be cast out into their own place! And the world shall be burned with fire.

4 And how merciful is our God unto us, for he remembereth the house of Israel, both roots and branches; and he stretches forth his hands unto them all the day long; and they are a stiffnecked and a gainsaying people; but as many as will not harden their hearts shall be saved in the kingdom of God.

5 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I beseech of you in words of soberness that ye would repent, and come with full purpose of heart, and cleave unto God as he cleaveth unto you. And while his arm of mercy is extended towards you in the light of the day, harden not your hearts.

6 Yea, today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts; for

Jacob 6:2
AF 333, 343

Jacob 6:4
EM 1:32
EM 2:714
CR91-O 41

Jacob 6:5
CR97-A 20
Jacob 6:5–7
EM 2:582

the strength of the roots to support the entire tree.

6.7 In the face of truth and light, why would a people indulge themselves in perversity, producing evil in their lives when all that has been done for them should have inspired them to produce good? Is this not premeditated rebellion, a succumbing to the lusts of the flesh, the temptations of this fallen world? God will not be mocked, however, and the prunings will come, as will the fires which will consume the branches which have been cut away for the sake of the life of the tree.

6.8 Accepting the testimonies of the prophets, seers, and revelators brings life and vitality to the lives of the children of men. Faith in Christ will ultimately produce repentance from sin and a willingness to obey the word of God. Baptism by immersion by proper authority may bring about a remission of all past wrongdoing and the accompanying laying on of hands for the Gift of the Holy Ghost, the personal revelator which may guide and direct our affairs for the remainder of our mortal lives. For any covenant branch of the House of Israel to rebel against the influence of the Holy Ghost, to persist in wickedness in the face of divine counsel, is to reject the salvation of Christ represented by baptism, a mockery of the atoning sacrifice wrought in the Garden of Gethsemane for the children of God.

6.8.14—*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.

6.8.27—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

6.9 The resurrection from the dead is a universal gift given to every man, woman, and child who has lived upon the earth at any time. No man can avoid that redemption from mortality. Therefore, through the power of the resurrection which is in Jesus Christ, every man will be brought before the judgment bar of God in order to be held accountable for his conduct in mortality. The great embarrassment which will befall the rebellious is that they will know in that day that they could have been redeemed from all of their wrongdoing, had they chosen differently. In the presence of God we will know who we were before we came into mortality and what we might have become had

why will ye die?

7 For behold, after ye have been nourished by the good word of God all the day long, will ye bring forth evil fruit, that ye must be hewn down and cast into the fire?

8 Behold, will ye reject these words? *Will ye reject the words of the prophets; and will ye reject all the words which have been spoken concerning Christ, after so many have spoken concerning him; and deny the good word of Christ, and the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and quench the Holy Spirit, and make a mock of the great plan of redemption, which hath been laid for you?

9 Know ye not that if ye will do these things, that the power of the redemption and the resurrection, which is in Christ, will bring you to stand with shame and awful guilt before the bar of God?

Jacob 6:7
CR97-A 91
CR02-A 91

Jacob 6:8
EM 3:1088
CR93-O 32, 49
CR00-A 108
* p. 140
Jacob 6:8–13
CR86-O 72

Jacob 6:9
MF 313
EM 2:772
CR90-O 46

we lived our lives in accordance with the truth and light provided by the servants of God.

6.9.23—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

6.10 The power of mercy can only work upon those who have formally called upon that gift of Christ. Without mercy, without the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ operative in our lives, we are exposed to the full weight and measure of the law of God. Eternal law governs the universe and at the heart of that law is equality, that all of creation will be judged by the same eternal standard. Punishment for rebellion will be exacted, but how can one who has been imprisoned repay the indebtedness incurred? It cannot be done. Therefore, without hope, without expectations, the damned soul suffers for his inexcusable conduct, a suffering unquenchable that burns in his mind and heart as he had been filled with fire. This is the eternal fate of all those whose rebellions against God and His Christ have ripened them for destruction.

6.10.19–21—*lake of fire*—There is, of course, no such substantive lake, but this phrase serves as a powerful metaphor for the disciple of Christ as to the eternal affects brought about by unrepentant sin (see *2 NE-C 9.16.71–73*)

6.10.23—*brimstone*—The English word “brimstone” derives from roots which probably mean “burning stone” and is in reference to sulfur.

6.11 The strait gate that opens upon the straight and narrow path towards eternal life is repentance and baptism, as described in Lehi’s Dream. The path established by the rod of iron leads directly to the Tree of Life. The words of God, His Son, His servants, and the promptings of the Holy Ghost all are represented by the rod.

6.12 The way of righteousness is simple and not particularly sophisticated to the mind and heart of this fallen world. The way to destruction is paved by the pride of man and the philosophies which he devises for himself, a road easily traveled, but leading to destruction. What more can be said?

6.13 At the end of Jacob 3, the brother of Nephi concluded his sermon to his people at the Temple in the land of Nephi. Beginning with chapter 4, Jacob

10 And according to the power of justice, for justice cannot be denied, ye must go away into that lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames are unquenchable, and whose smoke ascendeth up forever and ever, which lake of fire and brimstone is endless torment.

11 O then, my beloved brethren, repent ye, and enter in at the strait gate, and continue in the way which is narrow, until ye shall obtain eternal life.

12 O be wise; what can I say more?

13 Finally, I bid you farewell, until I shall meet you before the pleasing

Jacob 6:10
AF 59
MD 281, 407
EM 3:1391
CR01-A 30

Jacob 6:11
CR00-O 21
Jacob 6:11–13
MF 313

Jacob 6:12
CR91-A 31

begins a treatise on the Allegory of Zenos for the benefit of his future readers, an entirely different audience from those at the Temple. The Allegory ends with the last verse of chapter 5, but Jacob continued with his related commentary throughout chapter 6. Chapter 7 will recount an event that transpired many years after Jacob's teachings on the great prophecies uttered by Zenos. Hence, in this verse, Jacob provides his farewell to those who have been given the opportunity to contemplate his words. The bar of God will be pleasing to the faithful and disconcerting to the rebellious.

6.13.27—*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.

7.1 The central question raised by this episode is from whence came Sherem? Had he been a Lamanite, the racial prejudice of the Nephites would have been sufficient to have dismissed him almost at once. We know of only three major centers of civilizations in the Americas at the time Jacob served as the prophet of the Lord God of Israel. The Lamanites remained, apparently, in the land of their first inheritance; that is to say, the land where the family of Lehi had established themselves after they disembarked from their ship. The Nephites later established themselves in the mountains of the land of Nephi. By the time Jacob's ministry was drawing to a close, the people of Mulek, the followers of the sole surviving son of King Zedekiah of Jerusalem, had undoubtedly arrived in the Americas. This group would eventually establish themselves to the north of the land of Nephi in the lowlands near the narrow neck of land which they would call the land of Zarahemla. The combining of the Nephites and the Mulekites in the land of Zarahemla would not take place for at least another two hundred years under the direction of Mosiah, the father of King Benjamin. Was Sherem a dissident Nephite or a lone Mulekite adventurer that had made his way into the mountains of Nephi? If he were a dissident, there are other questions that arise. We are not told by Nephi or Jacob if any from among their settlement had traveled farther into the wilderness of Nephi to establish other communities. If Sherem were not a Lamanite nor itinerant Mulekite, could he have come from another Nephite settlement separate from the central part of the land of Nephi? If so, then Sherem apparently returned to the land of Nephi from one of these outlying communities in order to work his wiles. One of these possibilities must be true, otherwise, the words “came among the people” simply means “became notorious among the people”, which would be as an egregious semantic wrenching of a phrase as ever there was.

7.1.21—*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.

7.1.25—*Sherem*—An apostate Nephite who in the days of Jacob the brother of Nephi, sought to undermine the prophet's influence upon the people for his own immoral purposes

bar of God, which bar striketh the wicked with awful dread and fear. Amen.

{Chapter V}
(Chapter 7)

{9—1830}

1 AND now it came to pass after some years had passed away, there came a man among the people of Nephi, whose name was Sherem.

Jacob 7
MD 715
CR81-O 92

Jacob 7:1–4
EM 1:148
Jacob 7:1–23
MD 40
DNTC 3:381
EM 1:45

7.2 Sherem professed to be a follower of Moses and yet did not accept the notion of a coming Messiah. Central to his argument was a flawed sense of eternity that was and is not unique with Sherem. This anti-Christ's fundamental assumption was that no one could know the future and because of that no man could prophecy effectively of a Savior. At the heart of his logic was another unuttered assumption. While it may be said that no man could know of himself regarding the future history of mankind, yet did not God know? Could not God inform the prophet and the prophet then utter the words of God? As others have pointed out before, Sherem's basic principle of theology was that even God did not know the future. Thus, not only was Sherem an anti-Christ, he was also an atheist and was guilty of an even greater blasphemy than that of which he had accused Jacob. There are those among us who profess the true and living faith and yet deny the absolute foreknowledge of God. We ought not to be deceived by them.

7.2.24—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

7.3 Other anti-Christ's like Alma's Korihor, had as their motivation the acquisition of wealth, fame, and power. While these are not explicitly articulated here, we would probably not be far from the mark to attribute these same lusts to the heart and mind of Sherem. Sherem's desire to confront Jacob is no more than a vain and self-promoting attempt to put another notch on his verbal gun. He wished to destroy Jacob that he might be exalted in the eyes of the people of Nephi.

7.3.28—*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 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.

7.3.32—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particu-

2 And it came to pass that he began to preach among the people, and to declare unto them that there should be no Christ. And he preached many things which were flattering unto the people; and this he did that he might overthrow the doctrine of Christ.

3 And he labored diligently that he might lead away the hearts of the people, insomuch that he did lead away many hearts; and he knowing that I, Jacob, had faith in Christ who should come, he sought much opportunity that he might come unto me.

larly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

7.4 When men are learned, they think they are wise. The mastery of vocabulary does not imbue the linguist with either wisdom or holiness. Sherem had the power to speak the things that the people wanted to hear, but unlike Jacob he did not desire to teach the people what they needed.

7.5 What untutored arrogance on the part of Sherem! How does one convert a prophet of God, a man who has spoken with the Lord, to atheism? Who does Sherem think he is? Who does he think Jacob is? The problem with sinners is that they are blind; they cannot see the glory of God as it rests upon His servants. They have no fear because they cannot see the danger. Sherem has partaken of the same spirit by which Lucifer questioned the Savior's Sonship (see *MT-C 4.1-11*).

7.6 Hear the vain fellow prattle! Perhaps too much could be made of the varying forms of the pronouns used by Sherem. This is, after all, a translation from Reformed Egyptian. Yet, Sherem's linguistic prowess has been brought to the forefront in the narrative and one wonders if some of his verbal sophistry has survived the translation. "You" would be appropriate in most conversational settings; "thou" is generally reserved for intimacy and reverence; "ye", if referring to a single person, is a marker for extreme deference, as unto royalty. This sort of verbal manipulation would not have been beyond Sherem.

7.6.21—*Brother*—Used as an honorific, as flattery rather than as an endearment.

7.6.22—*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 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.

7.6.33—*you*—The formal objective form of the second person singular.

7.6.42—*thou*—The informal nominative form of the second person singular.

7.6.49—*ye*—The informal nominative form of the second person plural.

4 And he was learned, that he had a perfect knowledge of the language of the people; wherefore, he could use much flattery, and much power of speech, according to the power of the devil.

Jacob 7:4
CR87-O 41

5 And he had hope to shake me from the faith, notwithstanding the many revelations and the many things which I had seen concerning these things; for I truly had seen angels, and they had ministered unto me. And also, I had heard the *voice of the Lord speaking unto me in very word, from time to time; wherefore, I could not be shaken.

Jacob 7:5
EM 2:714
CR87-A 98

* p. 141

{~~9~~—1830}

6 And it came to pass that he came unto me, and on this wise did he speak unto me, saying: Brother Jacob, I have sought much opportunity that I might speak unto you; for I have heard and also know that thou goest about much, preaching that which ye call the gospel, or the doctrine of Christ.

Jacob 7:6-12
MA 113

7.6.52—*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.

7.6.57—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

7.7 Sherem accuses Jacob of teaching the Nephites to not observe the Law of Moses. This, of course, is an unmitigated falsehood (see 4.5). Jacob and Joseph had been ordained priests and teachers to the Nephites in order to perform the ordinances of the Mosaic Law. The family of Lehi had perceived in the observance of the Law of Moses archetypal allusions to the coming of the Messiah, the Redeemer of the world, the Son of God. What possible objection could Sherem have had to this understanding? The outward observances would not have changed one iota even with a full-blown Christian interpretation of every detail

7.7.24—*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”.

7.7.28–29—*right way*—In this Sherem spoke a modicum of truth. The Law of Moses was at that time, the “right way”. There would be attempts to discontinue the observance of the Law at the time of the Savior’s birth, but these would be thwarted by the prophets of God at the same time. It would not be until after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ that the outward ordinances of the Law would be discontinued.

7.7.55—*Sherem*—An apostate Nephite who in the days of Jacob the brother of Nephi, sought to undermine the prophet’s influence upon the people for his own immoral purposes

7.7.62—*blasphemy*—To teach that the nature of God is different from eternal reality is, indeed, blasphemy. Jacob, however, is guilty of no such thing.

7.7.66—*knoweth*—Perhaps no man can know of himself that which will transpire in the far distant future, but God certainly does. The very nature of prophecy implies that God does know the future and is willing to communicate the fact to His servants. To assert that God does

7 And ye have led away much of this people that they pervert the right way of God, and keep not the law of Moses which is the right way; and convert the law of Moses into the worship of a being which ye say shall come many hundred years hence. And now behold, I, Sherem, declare unto you that this is blasphemy; for no man knoweth of such things; for he cannot tell of things to come. And after this manner did Sherem contend against me.

Jacob 7:7
EM 1:127, 161
EM 2:749
Jacob 7:7–8, 13–20
EM 1:148

not communicate future events because He Himself does not know them, is, of course, the quintessence of blasphemy.

7.8 If one does not believe that God can anticipate the conduct or thinking of any man, then an atheist like Sherem can blithely walk into the cannon's roar without fear. This sort of ignorant trepidation, however, offers no protection when the canister explodes. Sherem had absolutely no chance against such a man as Jacob, a servant of the living God filled with the power and influence of the Holy Spirit.

7.9 How is it that Sherem "knew" that there has never been a Christ and that there should never be one? Is he omniscient? In order to make such a declaration, Sherem would have to be God Himself. Even a first-year student of philosophy can discern the problem that Sherem has created for himself. One cannot prove a negative, particularly if there is any evidence in support of the affirmative.

7.9.9—*Christ*—Simply put, the name "Christ" is the Greek translation of the Hebrew "Messiah". In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean "anointed one". Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

7.10 Sherem has taken an untenable position and one must wonder why. He asserts that the position of Jacob and the other disciples regarding the coming Messiah is blasphemy and yet the scriptures are replete with the testimony of one prophet after another that such a divine manifestation was in the offing.

7.11 The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus. A man cannot truly be a prophet of God without bearing fervent and unflinching testimony that Jesus of Nazareth is the very Christ.

7.11.17—*Christ*—Simply put, the name "Christ" is the Greek translation of the Hebrew "Messiah". In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean "anointed one". Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings

8 But behold, the Lord God poured in his Spirit into my soul, insomuch that I did confound him in all his words.

9 And I said unto him: Deniest thou the Christ who shall come? And he said: If there should be a Christ, I would not deny him; but I know that there is no Christ, neither has been, nor ever will be.

10 And I said unto him: Believest thou the scriptures? And he said, Yea.

11 And I said unto him: Then ye do not understand them; for they truly testify of Christ. Behold, I say unto you that none of the prophets have written, nor prophesied, save they have spoken concerning this Christ.

Jacob 7:9–11
EM 2:845
Jacob 7:9–12
EM 3:1164

Jacob 7:10
AF 254
Jacob 7:10–11
EM 1:217

Jacob 7:11
PM 78
EM 1:83
EM 2:724, 894
CR83-O 12

and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

7.12 Sherem is like unto many erstwhile Christians who willingly accept portions of the sacred writ but cannot abide all that God has caused to be written. Why receive all that has been written in the Law of Moses and yet reject that which the Law anticipated? Sherem clearly has a hidden agenda here that has not, as yet, come to light. As will be discerned below, Sherem is motivated by rather base desires. At the heart of Jacob's teaching is the importance of individual redemption, a salvation that could not be possible unless there were a divine intervention of some kind. The Law of Moses exemplified the justice of God for Jacob; the Gospel of Jesus Christ constituted the mercy of God. There could be no sanctification or exaltation for mankind without both justice and mercy. Why Sherem preferred a monopolar teaching will be revealed by his depravity of spirit.

7.12.33–34—*Holy Ghost*—Jacob knew as much about the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ as any man living. He had been a continual recipient of visions and revelations pertaining to the Savior, so much so that his father Lehi said of him that he was blessed even as Jesus' own Apostles would be blessed for having been in his company for three years. In addition, Jacob had confirmed to his soul the truth of those things that he had both seen and heard by the power of the Holy Ghost, a testimony that cannot be confused, misinterpreted, or denied.

7.13 And here we have unfurled Sherem's true colors. He is fundamentally a sign-seeker. While all adulterers may not be sign-seekers, it is invariably true that all sign-seekers have committed that heinous sin against Heaven and humanity. Note that Sherem's penchant for sarcasm has at last been exposed for what it is.

7.14 Integral to Sherem's desire to have the Law of Moses in force but without the influence of Jacob's Christianity is Sherem's immorality. We will remember that one of the two great spiritual crimes addressed by Jacob at the Temple in the land of Nephi was their growing desire to have multiple wives and concubines, a practice that had been proscribed by the Lord God of Israel through His prophet Lehi (see 2.22–35). Lehi, Nephi, and Jacob had all been fervent in their witness that the world was to be redeemed by the Son of God, the Messiah promised before the foundations of the earth were laid. By discrediting Jacob's testimony of the Savior, Sherem sought also to disenfranchise the prohibition against plural marriage. His support of the Law of Moses had nothing to do with his faith; Sherem merely saw it as a means to establish his concupiscence as the norm through evoking the levirate practices allowed by the Law. That Sherem was already morally bankrupt there can be no doubt; he merely wished to destroy Jacob's influence among the people so that his adultery might be acceptable in Nephite society. The doom that befell Sherem was to signal two facts: first, that there was a God with all of the characteristics, attributes, and perfections that any worshipper might expect in a divine

12 And this is not all—it has been made manifest unto me, for I have heard and seen; and it also has been made manifest unto me by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, I know if there should be no atonement made all mankind must be lost.

Jacob 7:12
PM 228
EM 2:714

{*¶*—1830}

13 And it came to pass that he said unto me: Show me a sign by this power of the Holy Ghost, in the which ye know so much.

Jacob 7:13–14
EM 3:1310

14 And I said unto him: What am I that I should tempt God to show unto thee a sign in the thing which thou knowest to be true? Yet thou wilt deny it, because thou art of the devil. Nevertheless, not my will be done; but if God shall smite thee, let that be a sign unto thee that he has power, both in heaven and in earth; and also, that Christ shall come. And thy will, O Lord, be done, and not mine.

Jacob 7:14
EM 3:1309

being; and second, that the future could be known, and that prescience took its most perfect form in the prophecies regarding the coming of the Messiah.

7.14.39—*devil*—Sherem was already carnal and sensual; devilishness had long since followed in the wake of the other two. Sherem served the interests of Satan, though his motivations for doing so were quite personal and had little or nothing to do with theology.

7.14.72—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

{9—1830}

7.15 Jacob was not disposed to command the powers of Heaven merely to justify the truth of his own teachings. The just shall live by faith. Therefore, he was willing to suffer disappointment and mockery at the hands of his people for not having dealt summarily with Sherem. Jacob was willing to accept the will of God as being in the best interests of both Heaven and earth and feared not the slings and arrows of his fellow men. This was not a matter of faith; it was a matter of propriety. We have scriptural accounts of others who have been overcome by the power of God. Some, like Alma and Lamoni, were given reprieves, by which they became a blessing to the people. Others, like Sherem and Korihor, were dismissed without argument. In all of this the will of God served as the arbiter, a fact which should satisfy all concerned.

7.15.9—*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 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.

7.15.25—*fell*—We are not told whether he was unconscious or not. If he had been, we might suggest that his experience might have been somewhat similar to that of Alma the son of Alma and that of King Lamoni.

7.15.37—*nourished*—By whom? Alma was not averse to caring for past nemeses; perhaps Jacob was not either.

7.15.42–43—*many days*—Of those similarly afflicted, three days seems to be the bench mark. Given Sherem’s circumstances, however, more time may have been required to bring about the partial regeneration that prompted him to make his confession.

15 And it came to pass that when I, Jacob, had spoken these words, the power of the Lord came upon him, insomuch that he fell to the earth. And it came to pass that he was nourished for the space of many days.

7.16 Sherem was given the opportunity to confess his sins before the people of

16 And it came to pass that he said

the Nephites. In this we perceive a difference between the perfidy of Korihor and Sherem. Korihor's voice was stopped, that he had no more utterance. We might rightfully conclude, as did Alma, that Korihor felt no remorse for what he had done and had he been allowed his voice, he would have returned to his attempts to corrupt the saints of God. Sherem apparently had been brought to his senses and wished to right many of the wrongs he had committed.

7.17 The most tender among us wish to see some redemption for Sherem, and perhaps in the economy of God there awaits for him something greater than that which he had chosen for himself. We are not privy to all of Sherem's confession. Did he confess all that he had done contrary to the law of God? Did Jacob choose to include just those aspects of his confession that had direct bearing on his own testimony and ministry as the prophet of God? We do not know. In his last words before dying Sherem testified of what must be considered great spiritual experiences.

7.17.33—*Christ*—Simply put, the name "Christ" is the Greek translation of the Hebrew "Messiah". In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean "anointed one". Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

7.18 How is it that Sherem had been deceived of the devil? Korihor will be quite explicit about how he was apparently duped. The fact remains, however, that Satan only has that power which we allow him to have, a power that comes as a direct result of our rebellion against the will of God. For all of his arguments to the contrary, Sherem knew that adultery was wrong, but he had nonetheless followed after the lusts of his own heart and had corrupted himself with immorality. The devil then could inspire him to do almost anything else. It is clear that during the time he was recuperating from the initial effects of the power of God that had come upon him, Sherem becomes perfectly aware of his wickedness and the consequences thereof.

7.19 Had Sherem become a Son of Perdition? He certainly had committed a number of transgressions that would have pointed him in that direction. Given his own confession, however, can we not perceive some potential for redemption? Had he committed a sin against the Holy Ghost? Without question he had sinned against the Father and the Son, yet according to the Lord himself, these may be forgiven (see *MT-C 12.31-32*).

7.19.23—*Christ*—Simply put, the name "Christ" is the Greek translation of the Hebrew "Messiah". In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean

unto the people: Gather together on the morrow, for *I shall die; wherefore, I desire to speak unto the people before I shall die.

{*¶*—1830}

17 And it came to pass that on the morrow the multitude were gathered together; and he spake plainly unto them and denied the things which he had taught them, and confessed the Christ, and the power of the Holy Ghost, and the ministering of angels.

18 And he spake plainly unto them, that he had been deceived by the power of the devil. And he spake of hell, and of eternity, and of eternal punishment.

19 And he said: I fear lest I have committed the unpardonable sin, for I have lied unto God; for I denied the Christ, and said that I believed the scriptures; and they truly testify of him. And because I have thus lied unto God I greatly fear lest my case shall be awful; but I

* p. 142

Jacob 7:19
MD 441
DNTC 3:382
EM 4:1499

“anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

7.20 Sherem had made an attempt to rectify the damage that he had done to the Nephites. Surely this must count for something in the eternal scheme of things.

7.21 How many of Sherem’s disciples were in the audience? How many of the Nephites had been convinced of his doctrines? Jacob said that many hearts had been led away by his teachings (see 7.3). Did those who had hearkened to the doctrine of Sherem perceive the implications of disregarding the doctrines of Christ as espoused by Lehi, Nephi, and Jacob? Did they recognize that the path to having a plurality of wives was blocked by the doctrine of Christ? These had been a people who had been susceptible to such pernicious thinking before. Sherem’s cleverness must have come as a delight to those who were ready to indulge themselves in immoral conduct. Imagine the consternation of those who had looked upon Sherem as a kind of perverted liberator when he himself was divinely brought to account for his perversions. We do not have to use our imaginations much since Jacob describes their reaction to us. Their fall to the earth was undoubtedly accompanied with shock, horror, and despair.

7.22 One is reminded of the prayers of Alma the elder and those of King Mosiah in conjunction with their wayward sons. The young men were brought to a complete awareness of what their eternal destiny would be if they continued to pursue their active conspiracy against the Church and Kingdom of God. Alma the younger passed through an excruciating experience before coming to repentance, and notwithstanding the nature of the suffering, both Mosiah and Alma were grateful to God for that imposed experience that their children might be redeemed from their sins, perceiving it as an answer to their prayers. Jacob is expressing similar sentiments here.

7.22.8—*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 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.

7.23 The key to salvation is an awareness and acceptance of the truth. So long as the Nephites did not avail themselves of the sacred writings of the prophets

confess unto God.

{*¶*—1830}

20 And it came to pass that when he had said these words he could say no more, and he gave up the ghost.

21 And when the multitude had witnessed that he spake these things as he was about to give up the ghost, they were astonished exceedingly; insomuch that the power of God came down upon them, and they were overcome that they fell to the earth.

22 Now, this thing was pleasing unto me, Jacob, for I had requested it of my Father who was in heaven; for he had heard my cry and answered my prayer.

{*¶*—1830}

23 And it came to pass that peace and the love of God was restored

Jacob 7:20–21
MD 312

Jacob 7:23
EM 1:148

of God, they were susceptible to deception by every wily and eloquent man. Had the people been diligent in their studies prior to the appearance of Sherem among them, his teachings would have found no purchase on their minds or upon their hearts.

7.24 We may only guess at the manners in which the Nephites attempted to preach the Gospel to the Lamanites. One wonders at the probable number of missionary martyrs that must have been incurred in the process. The desire for war, bloodshed, and hatred is a stark contrast to the peace and love of God that defined the Nephites at this time. It seems clear as well that the Lamanites had discovered the location of the land of Nephi.

7.24.16—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

7.25 If, as we believe, the land of Nephi was ensconced in the heights of the mountains, the Nephite defenses could have been formidable indeed. The Lamanites would have been hard-pressed to successfully assail the fortress that the land of Nephi must have become after several generations. No doubt the construction of military resorts had been ongoing since the days of Nephi, their first king and protector. After having done all that they could do to protect themselves against their enemies, the Nephites ultimately knew that they temporal salvation would have to be a gift from God. They might be strong and well-trained, but the Lord God was stronger still. They might have hewn stone to bolster their defenses, yet the Father and the Son constituted the real source of their protection. So long as the Nephites conducted their affairs in accordance with this profound trust in the God of their fathers, they would come off triumphant.

7.25.5—*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.

7.26 Jacob began his record by recounting the words of his brother regarding the Small Plates. This specific counsel came fifty-five years after Lehi had left Jerusalem, or about 546 BC (see 1.1–8). Jacob would have been no less than forty-five years of age at the time. As far as can be discerned, this is the sole temporal marker given by Jacob in his narrative. The next temporal marker that appears in the Small Plates is found in the account of Enos, the son of Jacob. That was given when Enos himself had become old, after one hundred seventy-nine years had passed away, or about 420 BC. Thus, from the birth of Jacob in about 595 BC to the death of Enos about 420 BC, 175 years had passed. How old was Jacob when Enos was born? If Enos lived to be a centenarian, Jacob would have been approximately 75 years old when his faithful son was conceived. If Jacob lived to be a centenarian, their lives would have overlapped by 25 years. Given these assumptions, Jacob would have died in 495BC and Enos would have been born in 520 BC. All of this is, of course, mere speculation, but reasonable. Having a wise man spiritually govern a people for more than fifty years would have established the Nephites in their faith. Hence, we should not be surprised when we see the Lord doing much the same in our own day.

again among the people; and they searched the scriptures, and hearkened no more to the words of this wicked man.

24 And it came to pass that many means were devised to reclaim and restore the Lamanites to the knowledge of the truth; but it all was vain, for they delighted in wars and bloodshed, and they had an eternal hatred against us, their brethren. And they sought by the power of their arms to destroy us continually.

25 Wherefore, the people of Nephi did fortify against them with their arms, and with all their might, trusting in the God and rock of their salvation; wherefore, they became as yet, conquerors of their enemies.

{9—1830}

26 And it came to pass that I, Jacob, began to be old; and the record of this people being kept on the other plates of Nephi, wherefore, I conclude this record, declaring that I have written according to the best of my knowledge, by saying that the time passed away with us, and also our lives passed away like as it were unto us a dream, we being a lonesome and a solemn people, wanderers, cast out from Jerusalem, born in tribulation, in a wilderness, and hated of our brethren, which *caused wars and contentions; wherefore, we did mourn out our days.

Jacob 7:26
MD 519
FPM 344
EM 2:713
CR01-O 32

* p. 143

7.26.8—*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 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.

7.26.23–24—*other plates*—Referring to the Large Plates of Nephi, the secular record.

7.26.26—*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.

7.26.79—*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.

7.27 Having faithfully served his people, having faithfully fulfilled the commandments given to him by his brother Nephi, having faithfully guided the spiritual affairs of the Nephites for a half a century, Jacob is prepared to leave mortality, to find rest for a time in the bosom of Abraham.

7.27.3—*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 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.

7.27.20—*Enos*—The son of Jacob who in turn was the brother of Nephi and the son of Lehi. His account of his conversion plays a prominent role in the Small Plates of Nephi.

7.27.22–23—*these plates*—Meaning, of course, the Small Plates of Nephi.

7.27.33—*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.

7.27.35—*commanded*—See 1.1–8

7.27.59—*small*—By comparison to the writings of Nephi which comprise more than two-thirds of the whole.

7.27.77—*Brethren*—A perfectly good word in the English language which is derived through Anglo-Saxon from Germanic sources, in use in England as early as the 14th century. No doubt there is a morphological cognate in Reformed Egyptian.

7.27.78—*adieu*—A perfectly good word in the English language which is derived from Norman French from Latin sources, in use in England as early as the 14th century. No doubt there is a morphological cognate in Reformed Egyptian.

{¶—1830}

27 And I, Jacob, saw that I must soon go down to my grave; wherefore, I said unto my son Enos: Take these plates. And I told him the things which my brother Nephi had commanded me, and he promised obedience unto the commands. And I make an end of my writing upon these plates, which writing has been small; and to the reader I bid farewell, hoping that many of my brethren may read my words. Brethren, adieu.

Alphabetized List of Specifically Noted Words and Phrases in Jacob Commentary

- a resurrection*—4.11.21–22
Abraham—4.5.46
Abraham—4.5.55
adieu—7.27.78
Amen—6.13.27
anointed—1.9.17
anxiety—1.5.7
bear the shame—1.8.39–41
beginning—5.75.75
believe in Christ—1.8.27–29
blasphemy—7.7.62
branches—5.4.46
branches—6.4.19
brethren—4.2.36
Brethren—7.27.77
brimstone—6.10.23
Brother—7.6.21
burdens—2.23.6
burned—5.7.71
caused—5.11.7
children—4.2.31
Christ—1.0.28
Christ—1.6.17
Christ—1.7.16
Christ—2.19.9
Christ—4.11.12
Christ—4.12.20
Christ—4.5.5
Christ—4.4.8
Christ—6.8.27
Christ—6.9.23
Christ—7.11.17
Christ—7.19.23
Christ—7.2.24
Christ—7.17.33
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Christ—7.9.9
Christ's—1.4.38
commanded—7.27.35
concubines—1.15.43
contentions—3.13.39
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David—1.15.36
David—2.24.2
David—2.23.48
desiring—1.15.39
devil—7.14.39
dig—5.4.31
Enos—7.27.20
errand—1.17.20
excuse—2.23.35
faith—1.5.4
faith—4.11.45
fathers—4.2.47
fell—7.15.25
few words—1.0.30–31
fifty and five—1.1.8–10
fornication—3.12.18
good—5.25.20
gospel—7.6.52
grace—4.7.18
graft—5.8.22
heads—1.4.21
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his name—4.5.11–12
Holy Ghost—7.12.33–34
if—2.19.14
Isaac—4.5.72
Ishmaelites—1.13.21
Israel—1.7.59
Israel—5.1.24
Israel—5.3.14
Israel—5.2.6
Israel—6.1.32
Israel—6.4.15
Jacob—1.1.26
Jacob—1.14.3
Jacob—1.17.3
Jacob—1.18.3
Jacob—1.2.5
Jacob—1.8.44
Jacob—2.1.4
Jacob—3.1.4
Jacob—3.12.4
Jacob—3.14.8
Jacob—4.15.4
Jacob—4.1.9
Jacob—7.27.3
Jacob—7.3.28
Jacob—7.6.22
Jacob—7.22.8
Jacob—7.15.9
Jacob—7.26.8
Jacobites—1.13.15
Jerusalem—1.1.21
Jerusalem—2.25.17
Jerusalem—2.31.24
Jerusalem—2.32.30
Jerusalem—7.26.79
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