



Type: Magazine Article

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## Characters and Teachings of The Book of Mormon: Lesson Preview for 1956-57

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Source: *Relief Society Magazine*, Vol. 43 No. 6 (June 1956), pp. 403-404

Published by: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

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**Abstract:** It is hoped by the author that every Relief Society member will recognize that the primary purpose of The Book of Mormon is to reaffirm and re-establish in the minds of men that Jesus Christ is divine. It is further hoped that every Relief Society sister will be persuaded that firm testimonies of the divinity of Christ and rich personal blessings come to those who, diligently and with a prayerful heart, study The Book of Mormon.

The acceptance of The Book of Mormon as having been written and translated under the inspiration of the Lord will strengthen this testimony. That when this course has been completed, members of the Relief Society will have gained this priceless testimony, is the sincere hope of the author of these lessons and the general board of Relief Society.

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## LESSON DEPARTMENT

### *Theology*—Characters and Teachings of The Book of Mormon

Preview of Lessons for 1956-57

*Elder Leland H. Monson*

THE theology lessons for this year bring to a conclusion our six-year course of study of the Characters and Teachings of The Book of Mormon. During this course we have studied the lives of these remarkable prophets and have become acquainted with their faith, courage, and devotion in living and teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. These lessons have culminated in the memorable account of the birth, crucifixion, and resurrection of the Savior and his ministry as an immortal Being here on this continent.

The first two lessons for this year—beginning with 3 Nephi, chapter 15—continue the account of the ministry of Christ among the Nephite people and reveal the great compassion Jesus had for those who manifested such abiding faith in him. These lessons establish the fact that strict adherence to the Gospel Plan is necessary for eternal life and show that peace and happi-

ness come both to individuals and nations who obey the Lord's commandments.

The lessons also describe the great fall of the Nephite nation and show how continued wickedness destroys a people when they do not repent. These lessons also emphasize the fact that The Book of Mormon was written to the Gentiles, the Jews, and the Lamanites of the last days. They show that to the Gentiles would be given the privilege of unveiling the land of America after it had been kept hidden from the nations of the world for centuries. They point out that a great and marvelous work would be accomplished by the Gentiles in the last days. The Jews, the record tells us, would be a hated and despised people, but that the gospel would come to them, that many would begin to believe in Christ, and that they would be restored to the land of their inheritance. The

Lord also held out to the Lamanites some great promises for the last days. Mormon and Moroni directed part of their instructions to these Lamanites. Moroni urged present-day Lamanites to:

... be baptized in the name of Jesus, and lay hold upon the gospel of Christ, which shall be set before you, not only in this record but also in the record which shall come unto the Gentiles from the Jews, which record shall come from the Gentiles unto you (Mormon 7:8).

It is hoped by the author that every Relief Society member will recognize that the primary purpose of The Book of Mormon is to reaffirm and re-establish in the minds of men that Jesus Christ is divine. It is further hoped that every Relief Society sister will be persuaded that firm testimonies of the divinity of Christ and rich personal blessings come to those who, diligently and with a prayerful heart, study The Book of Mormon.

The acceptance of The Book of Mormon as having been written and translated under the inspiration of the Lord will strengthen this testimony. That when this course has been completed, members of the Relief Society will have gained this priceless testimony, is the sincere hope of the author of these lessons and the general board of Relief Society.

The lessons for the coming and final year have been given the following titles and objectives:

Lesson 41—*Jesus Instructs the Nephites* (3 Nephi, chapters 15-21)

Objective: To show the great compassion of Jesus toward the Nephites

who manifested such great faith in him, and his love for children.

Lesson 42—*Christ's Ministry Continued* (3 Nephi, chapters 22-30)

Objective: To show that strict adherence to the Gospel Plan is necessary for eternal life.

Lesson 43—*The Nephites and Lamanites Become a United People* (Fourth Nephi)

Objective: To show that peace and happiness come to individuals and nations through living the gospel of Christ in unity.

Lesson 44—*The Fall of the Nephite Nation as Recorded by Mormon* (the Book of Mormon, chapters 1-7; Moroni, chapters 7-9)

Objective: To show how continued wickedness destroys a nation when it does not repent.

Lesson 45—*Moroni Explains Principles and Ordinances of the Gospel* (the Book of Mormon, chapters 8 and 9; the Book of Ether, chapters 5 and 12:5-41; the Book of Moroni, chapters 1-7, and chapter 10)

Objective: To show ". . . if the day cometh that the power and gifts of God shall be done away among you, it shall be because of unbelief" (Moroni 10:24).

Lesson 46—*Prophecies Concerning the Jews, Gentiles, and Lamanites in the Latter Days*

Objective: To show that the prophecies made by Book of Mormon prophets are being fulfilled.

Lesson 47—*A Review of Outstanding Characters of The Book of Mormon*

Objective: To show through a study of the lives of the characters of The Book of Mormon that true greatness is found in a love of God and service to one's fellow men.

Lesson 48—"A New Witness for Christ"

Objective: To show that firm testimonies of the divinity of Christ and rich blessings come to those who study The Book of Mormon with a prayerful heart and practice its teachings in their lives.

## *Visiting Teacher Messages—*

### Book of Mormon Gems of Truth

Preview of Lessons for 1956-57

Leone O. Jacobs

THE visiting teacher messages for the coming season (1956-57) will conclude the six-year series "Book of Mormon Gems of Truth."

Messages for this year, as in previous years, are selected from the same material as outlined in the theology course, thus correlating the two. These gems of truth not only portray the character of their authors, but also set forth the eternal, unchangeable principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Book of Mormon prophets were indeed inspired by the Lord as shown by their prophecies and teachings. Messages of scripture dealing with important virtues and principles of the gospel will be discussed, and their practical application brought to our attention. The general subjects are: on *revelation*—the words of Mormon in Third Nephi; *prayer*—the words of the Savior to the multitude as given in Third Nephi; *charity*—the words of Mormon in the Book of Moroni; *sustaining authority*—the words of Mormon found in Third Nephi;

*love of God*—found in Fourth Nephi, during the period of peace which followed the visit of the Savior to the Nephites; *laboring diligently*—instruction of Mormon to his son, Moroni; *faith*—Mormon's teaching as found in the Book of Moroni; and, last, *the promise concerning a testimony* of The Book of Mormon as given by Moroni in his farewell exhortation.

This promise will insure a testimony of the truthfulness of The Book of Mormon as an added witness of the divinity of the Savior, to anyone who meets the requirements stated therein.

Inasmuch as these messages are brief and have universal appeal, they are suitable for presentation in all homes. It is again recommended that visiting teachers memorize the quotations.

The quotations and their objectives are as follows:

Lesson 41. "Yea, Wo Unto Him That Shall Deny the Revelations of