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Book of Mormon Sunday School Lessons, February 1932

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BOOK OF MORMON

General Board Committee: Alfred C. Rees, Chairman; James L. Barker, Vice Chairman; and Horace H. Cummings

To teachers:

During the month of January the discussions have been confined to the history of the Plates. They have been traced from the time Nephi began to etch the happenings of his day down to the time the Book of Mormon was published.

It is hoped that every teacher has succeeded in impressing her class with the fact that the records were always in the hands of men who knew their value and who also knew the Gospel plan. The class should, therefore, proceed with the year's work with perfect confidence in the teachings contained in such a book.

Review

There was also given an account of the Old Testament, how it came into being, and how it finally reached our hands; not in its original, complete form, but rather as men, who were not in a position to know of its value and worth, finally decided to permit portions of the writings to be embodied in sacred writ. Your class should be able to see at once the difference between the incomplete Hebrew scriptures and the authoritative, reliable, Nephitic writings that composed the Book of Mormon.

LESSONS FOR FEBRUARY

First Sunday, February 7, 1932

Uniform Lesson. Subject: Honesty and Trustworthiness. (See Supts. Dept. for teacher's outline.)

The Book of Mormon lesson for February 14, deals with the history of the New Testament. Permit class members to present the facts in the class, and invite discussion of the questions given. Just as was the case with the Old Testament, the New Testament had a stormy career. Here again men, without authority attempted to pass judgment upon what was worthwhile retaining and what should be omitted and cast aside. At this point show the difference in treatment with the sacred plates that later became the Book of Mormon.

Here are the necessary and logical conclusions respecting the Old and the New Testament, which the class should discuss:

1. The Bible is a compilation of sacred writings.
2. They are written by holy men.
3. They never were all in the hands of any one authorized servant of the Lord, as was the case with the Book of Mormon.

4. In the course of time, many sacred writings were lost.

5. The men who finally assembled these remaining writings were not duly appointed by the Lord.

6. They did not understand the Gospel.

7. As a consequence, they could not understand the full value of these written histories and Gospel doctrines.

8. They were obliged to place their own interpretation upon statements which appeared in these writings.

9. This brought about changes from the original text and numerous omissions.

10. What these compilers have given us is valuable, but incomplete.

11. We are indebted to them for the big service they have rendered.

12. When we read the Bible, it must be with the understanding that much valuable teaching and information is lacking.

13. Finally, the translations in various languages have added further changes in the text.

14. This has led to confusion, and has caused students of the Bible to place different interpretations upon the same text.

15. That is why we claim that we believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly.

As you discuss each of these points with your class, let them make comparisons with the Book of Mormon.

Then they will see why we place such complete, unquestioned reliance upon the Book of Mormon. At the same time, see that they recognize the outstanding value of the Bible as the Word of God, coming to us from another branch of the house of Israel.

THE KING JAMES TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE

When James I came to the throne of England, a petition was presented to him by the Puritan leaders asking for the reform of many abuses and the adjustment of various controversies. As a result, a conference was called at Hampton Court in 1604, and in the course of debate it was moved by Dr. Reynolds, President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, that a new translation of the Bible be made, which proposal received the sanction of the King. The ablest scholars were chosen and divided into companies; they studied critically the original manuscripts, consulted existing translations, carefully compared their work, and after seven years of labor brought forward the Bible

called the King James, sometimes the Authorized, Version (1611 A. D.)—Knox.

Hereafter, the outstanding leaders of the Nephites will be presented to your class. To each one will be attached his prophecies, sayings, revelations and accomplishments. In this manner the religious history of the Nephites will be emphasized; and each leader will be kept in memory on account of his particular contribution to his people. Lehi will be known for his marvelous vision as given in the lessons of Feb. 21 and 28th.

It is expected that you, as teacher, will not be content to read the leaflet, but that you will go into the Book of Mormon itself and get the whole picture of Lehi's ministry, so that you will be able to give life and meaning to the material on the leaflets. Permit the class to discuss the features of the vision: Let them tell how much is allegory; how much is a pro-

phesy; how much has been fulfilled; how much is yet to be fulfilled.

The big purpose is the application of lives of the boys and girls in your class. What do all the symbols and figures of speech mean, as given in Lehi's vision. The questions will help bring out these points. You should be able to get some spirited, stimulating reactions from your class on Free Agency, Purpose of Temptation. Satan's Objection etc. in February 28 lesson.

See how far they agree with Lehi on these points. Keep before them constantly the big purpose of life, viz. to overcome all temptation and all weaknesses and to acquire sufficient strength and power, through complete obedience, so that we may dwell with God in His glory. That is what Lehi tells us—that is his message to your class. See that they understand it, and feel it.



NEPHI'S VISION OF MARY AND THE "LAMB OF GOD"

(From drawing by L. A. Ramsey)