

2 Nephi

Chapter 26

2 Nephi 26 (**Chapter Divisions and Poetic Structure**):

There is conjecture as to whether chapter divisions were a part of the original transcription of the text of Second Nephi. However, by the time of the 1830 First Edition of the Book of Mormon the book of Second Nephi had been divided into fifteen chapters. In the present 1981 Edition, Second Nephi has 33 chapters. The following chart reflects how these chapters of Second Nephi correspond to one another:

<u>FIRST EDITION</u>	<u>PRESENT EDITION</u>
I	1—2
II	3
III	4
IV	5
V	6—8
VI	9
VII	10
VIII	11—15
IX	16—22
X	23—24
XI	25—27
XII	28—30
XIII	31
XIV	32
XV	33

Now this is important in my view because in viewing the structure of the text, I feel that the last verse in Chapter 25 should be made a part of Chapter 26. As there was no chapter break in the First Edition for Chapter XI (see chart) I will duplicate the last verse of Chapter 25 and include it with the text of Chapter 26 also.

(Alan Miner, Personal Notes)

2 Nephi 26:1 After Christ Shall Have Risen from the Dead He Shall Show Himself unto You, My Children, and My Beloved Brethren:

In 2 Nephi 26:1 Nephi prophesies that Christ will not only “show himself” unto the Nephites, but that “the words which he shall speak unto you shall be the law which ye shall do.” This implies a change from the Law of Moses to the Law of Christ. It is unknown whether Nephi is basing his prophecy on his vision recorded in First Nephi chapter 12 or another subsequent vision. As the chief record keeper of the tribe of Joseph and as the Patriarchal leader of the Nephites, I assume Nephi saw many things, and many heavenly beings, much in the same manner as Joseph Smith.

(Alan Miner, Personal Notes)

2 Nephi 26:3 Signs Given unto My People:

In 2 Nephi 26:3 Nephi states: "And after the Messiah shall come there shall be signs given unto my people of his birth, and also of his death and resurrection . . ." According to McConkie and Millet, the promise of a sign of confirmation is typical of divine instruction. The Old Testament establishes the pattern . . . [In the New Testament], Luke's Gospel begins with Gabriel's striking Zacharias dumb as a sign of the verity of the birth of a child of promise to him and his aged wife (Luke 1).



Zacharias in the Temple newworldencyclopedia.org

Christ himself decreed that the coming forth of the Book of Mormon would be the sign of the Father's work--the work of gathering in the last days (3 Nephi 21:1-7).



Various language editions of the Book of Mormon lightplanet.com

3 Nephi 21:1,2, 5:

1 And verily I say unto you, I give unto you a sign, that ye may know the time when these things shall be about to take place—that I shall gather in, from their long dispersion, my people, O house of Israel, and shall establish again among them my Zion;

2 And behold, this is the thing which I will give unto you for a sign—for verily I say unto you that when these things which I declare unto you, and which I shall declare unto you hereafter of myself, and by the power of the Holy Ghost which shall be given unto you of the Father, shall be made known unto the Gentiles that they may know concerning this people who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, and concerning this my people who shall be scattered by them;

7 And when these things come to pass that thy seed shall begin to know these things—it shall be a sign unto them, that they may know that the work of the Father hath already commenced unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he hath made unto the people who are of the house of Israel.

In his instruction to Joseph Smith, Moroni promised him a sign by which he might know that all that had been promised him would come to pass: many would seek to overthrow his work, but it would increase the more it was opposed (*Messenger and Advocate* 2:199).



Missouri Mobs

mormonhistoryguy.wordpress.com

Events of such transcendent magnitude as the birth, death, and resurrection of the Messiah must not go unnoticed and unannounced. (See Helaman 14:1-6; 3 Nephi 1:8.)

Helaman 14:1-6:

1 And now it came to pass that Samuel, the Lamanite, did prophesy a great many more things which cannot be written.

2 And behold, he said unto them: Behold, I give unto you a sign; for five years more cometh, and behold, then cometh the Son of God to redeem all those who shall believe on his name.

3 And behold, this will I give unto you for a sign at the time of his coming; for behold, there shall be great lights in heaven, insomuch that in the night before he cometh there shall be no darkness, insomuch that it shall appear unto man as if it was day.



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4 Therefore, there shall be one day and a night and a day, as if it were one day and there were no night; and this shall be unto you for a sign; for ye shall know of the rising of the sun and also of its setting; therefore they shall know of a surety that there shall be two days and a night; nevertheless the night shall not be darkened; and it shall be the night before he is born.

5 And behold, there shall a new star arise, such an one as ye never have beheld; and this also shall be a sign unto you.



A new star did appear

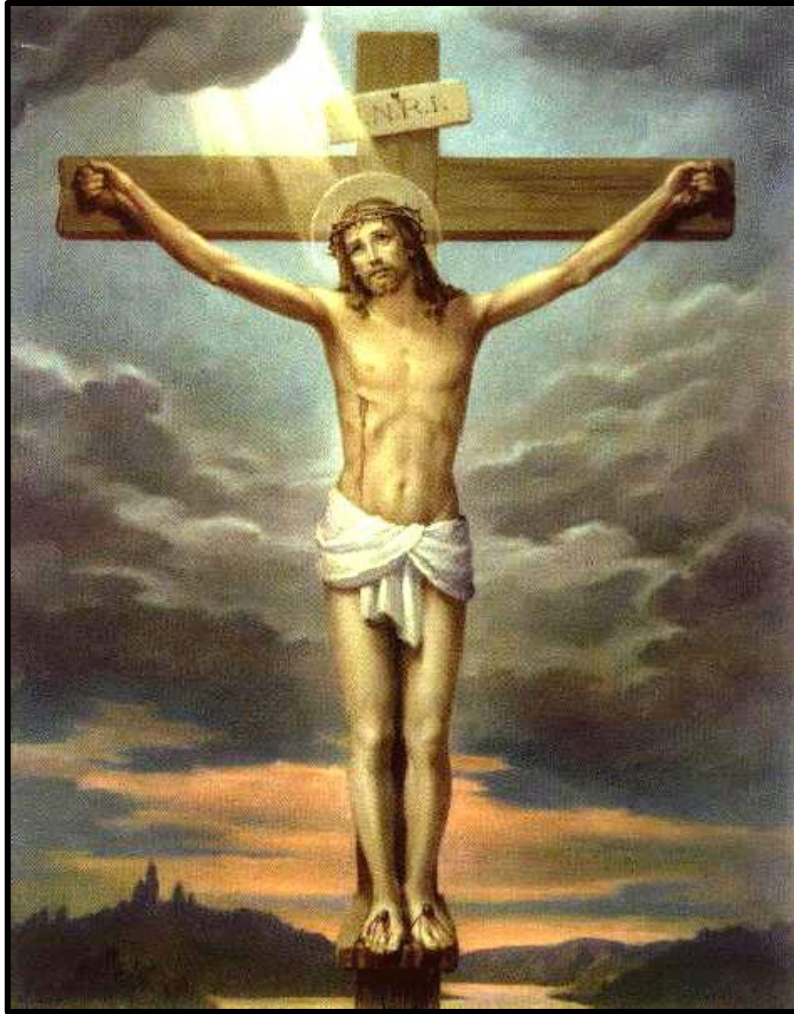


6 And behold this is not all, there shall be many signs and wonders in heaven.



The Wise men follow a star

aumstar.com



Jesus , “The Tree of Life” was crucified on a wooden cross—a symbolic “tree”

According to Peter, Jesus was crucified on a tree.” This was to be a sign to all the world of his identity as “The Tree of Life.” Moreover, according to John, on **this tree** were written the words: “Jesus of Nazareth The King of the Jews”

Acts 5:30

30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on **a tree**.

Acts 10:39

39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on **a tree**.

John 19:19

19 And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.



© EPA

Signs of earthly turmoil at Christ's death

Tallbloke.wordpress.com

3 Nephi 8: 5, 12, 19

5 And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, on the fourth day of the month, there arose a great storm, such an one as never had been known in all the land.

12 . . . for behold, the whole face of the land was changed, because of the tempest and the whirlwinds, and the thunderings and the lightnings, and the exceedingly great quaking of the whole earth;

19 And it came to pass that when the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the storm, and the tempest, and the quakings of the earth did cease—for behold, they did last for about the space of three hours; and it was said by some that the time was greater; nevertheless, all these great and terrible things were done in about the space of three hours—and then behold, there was darkness upon the face of the land.



Sign of Christ's resurrection - Angel at the tomb

lutherwasnotbornagain.com

Matthew 28:2

And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

(Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 1, p. 300-301.) [See the commentary on 3 Nephi 21:1-7]

2 Nephi 26:4 All Those Who Are Proud, and That Do Wickedly, the Day That Cometh Shall Burn Them up, Saith the Lord of Hosts, for They Shall Be As Stubble:

According to Sterling Allan, Nephi uses wordings in his record which are intentional parallels of other scriptures written by the prophets. Let us consider an example from Nephi's writings which shows intentional correlations in revealed writing. This example witnesses that the parallels in the Book of Mormon are meant to foreshadow the events of our day. Consider the following verses from 2 Nephi 26:

Great and terrible shall that day be unto the wicked, for they shall perish; and they perish because they cast out the prophets, and the saints, and stone them, and slay them; wherefore the cry of the blood of the saints shall ascend up to God from the ground against them.

Wherefore, all those who are proud, and that do wickedly, the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, for they shall be as stubble.

And they that kill the prophets, and the saints, the depths of the earth shall swallow them up, saith the Lord of Hosts; and mountains shall cover them, and whirlwinds shall carry them away, and buildings shall fall upon them and crush them to pieces and grind them to powder.

And they shall be visited with thunderings, and lightnings, and earthquakes, and all manner of destructions, for the fire of the Lord shall be kindled against them, and they shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall consume them, saith the Lord of Hosts. (2 Nephi 26:3-6)

If one was not aware of the context of these verses, he would most likely think that they were talking about the destruction of the wicked at the Second Coming. But the context is of the destruction of the wicked Leuites on the American continent. Nephi was pointing out the "signs" that would mark the "death and resurrection" of "the Messiah" (2 Nephi 26:3). He concluded this prophecy lamenting, "O the pain, and the anguish of my soul for the loss of the slain *of my people!* For I, Nephi, have seen it. . . ." (2 Nephi 26:7)

The reason we originally would have thought that these verses spoke of the destruction of the wicked at the Second Coming is because of the language used. In the first phrase Nephi used the words, "Great and terrible." These words are used elsewhere in the scriptures to describe the *latter-day* scene (see Joel 2:11, 1 Nephi 12:5). The reason stated for the destruction--"They cast out the prophets, and the saints . . ."--is also spoken of in latter-day prophecy (see D&C 87:7).

2 Nephi 26:4 & 6 repeat a verse found in the Old Testament, Malachi 4:1, which is given in the context of the latter days. Compare the wording used in Malachi with that used by Nephi in these two verses:

M/4:1 *all the proud*
26:4 *all those who are proud*

M/4:1 *and all that do wickedly*
26:4 *and that do wickedly*

M/4:1 *the day that cometh shall burn them up*
26:4 *the day that cometh shall burn them up*
26:6 *the day that cometh shall consume them*

M/4:1 *saith the Lord of hosts*
26:4 *saith the Lord of Hosts*
26:6 *saith the Lord of Hosts*

M/4:1 *shall be stubble*
26:4 *shall be as stubble*
26:6 *shall be as stubble*

Five entire phrases within the three verses being compared are virtually identical in their wording. It cannot be said that Nephi "quoted" Malachi, because Malachi was born around 100 years after the death of Nephi. Malachi could not have had access to Nephi's writings because they were separated by an ocean of water. When the resurrected Lord appeared to the Nephites and quoted from Malachi, he confirmed that "the Father had given unto Malachi" His words (3 Nephi 24:1). Here, then, is an example of direct revelation being responsible for a correlation.

The question still has not been answered as to why Nephi is using terminology that pertains to the latter-day destruction when the context says he is talking about the destruction of the wicked among his people anciently. *Without* an understanding of the concept of parallels, this might remain an enigma to us. *With* an understanding of parallels, the intention becomes quite clear here. Nephi is pointing out beyond doubt that (as President Benson put it), "The record of the Nephite history just prior to the Savior's visit reveals many parallels to our own day as we anticipate the Savior's second coming."ⁱⁱ

In case we still are not sure that this was the intent of the prophet Nephi, yet another indicator follows. In verse two of the next chapter (2 Nephi 27), he uses five separate phrases that are nearly identical with phrases found in verse two of the preceding chapter. This time, he is speaking of "the last days," when people "upon all the lands of the earth . . . will be drunken with iniquity and all manner of abominations" (2 Nephi 27:1). Compare his wording:

26:6	<i>they shall be visited</i>
27:2	<i>they shall be visited</i>
26:6	<i>with thunderings, and lightnings</i>
27:2	<i>with thunder . . . and with storm</i>
26:6	<i>and earthquakes</i>
27:2	<i>and with earthquakes</i>
26:6	<i>the fire of . . . the Lord shall be kindled</i>
27:2	<i>and with the flame of devouring fire</i>
26:6	<i>saith the Lord of Hosts</i>
27:2	<i>visited of the Lord of Hosts</i>

So, in 2 Nephi 26 the context is set at the time of the destruction of the wicked among his people preceding Christ's appearance to them. Then in chapter 27 the context is established as being that time when the wicked will be destroyed before Christ's second coming. Yet the wording used in both instances is virtually identical. In these cases, we would have to say that this was done intentionally through the element of inspiration.

The Lord never comes right out and tells us directly that this is what He is doing, but when we become aware of it there is no doubt. This selective wording is pervasive throughout the canvas of the standard works. The immense cross correlation of scriptures--often from detached sources--into one great whole bears the signature of an omniscient God ("And now it came to pass that when Jesus had expounded *all the scriptures in one*, which they had written, he commanded them that they should teach the things which he had expounded unto them"--3 Nephi 23:14). By recognizing this technique, we then have a tool for receiving many insights hitherto unknown.

Critics of the Book of Mormon look upon the passages just discussed as "plagiarism;" that Joseph Smith merely copied these passages into the text from the Bible. However, as Nephi sates: "Behold, the righteous that hearken unto the words of the prophets, and destroy them not, but look forward unto Christ with steadfastness for the signs which are given, *notwithstanding all persecution*--behold, they are they which shall not perish. But the *Son of Righteousness* shall appear unto them; and he shall *heal them*, and they shall have peace with him" (2 Nephi 26:8,9). The reader should note that the phrases "Son of Righteousness" and "healing" are also found in Malachi 4:2, the verse immediately following the one Nephi quoted just six verses prior to this (2 Nephi 26:2 = Malachi 4:1 = 3 Nephi 25:1) Again, Nephi used wording that ties directly into the latter-day deliverance, even though he was talking about the deliverance of his own people, "until three generations shall have passed away." (2 Nephi 26:9)ⁱⁱ [Sterling D. Allan, *The Vision of All*, www.greaterthings.com/Books/Vision/Overview/nephis-wording.htm, Jan. 9, 2001]

Note* As the reader will come to understand in the commentary on 2 Nephi 27, chapters 25-29 of 2 Nephi represent Nephi's likening of Isaiah 29 unto his people. Lest anybody think that Joseph Smith just plopped a section of Malachi or Isaiah into 2 Nephi 26:3-6, the reader should be aware that these verses, and especially the phrases in verse 4, lie at the heart of a complex prophetic chiasmic structure. Donald W. Parry gives the following chiasmic structure for 2 Nephi 26:1-9:

- A. And after Christ shall have risen from the dead he shall show himself unto you, my children, and my beloved brethren.
- B. and the words which he shall speak unto you shall be the law which ye shall do,
- C. For Behold, I say unto you that I have beheld that many generations shall pass away,
- D. and there shall be great wars and contentions among my people.
- E. And after the Messiah shall come there shall be signs given unto my people of his birth, and also of his death and resurrection; and great and terrible shall that day be unto the wicked,
- F. for they shall perish; and they perish
- G. because they cast out the prophets, and the saints, and stone them, and slay them; wherefore the cry of the blood of the saints shall ascend up to God from the ground against them.
- H. Wherefore, all those who are proud, and that do wickedly, the day that cometh shall burn them up,

H' *saith the Lord of Hosts*, for they shall be as stubble.

G' And they that kill the prophets, and the saints,

F. the depths of the earth shall swallow them up, _____ *saith the Lord of Hosts*;

and mountains shall cover them,
and whirlwinds shall carry them away,
and buildings shall fall upon them
and crush them to pieces
and grind them to powder.

E' And they shall be visited with thunderings,
and lightnings,
and earthquakes,
and all manner of destructions.

for the fire of the anger of the Lord shall be kindled against them, and they shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall consume them, *saith the Lord of Hosts*.

D' O the pain, and the anguish of my soul for the loss of the slain of my people!

C' For I, Nephi, have seen it, and it well nigh consumeth me before the presence of the Lord; but I must cry unto my God: Thy ways are just.

B' But behold, the righteous that hearken unto the words of the prophets, and destroy them not, but look forward unto Christ with steadfastness for signs which are given, notwithstanding all persecution--behold, they are they which shall not perish.

A' But the Son of righteousness shall appear unto them;
and he shall heal them, and they shall have peace with him, until three generations shall have passed away . . .

(Donald W. Parry, *The Book of Mormon Text Reformatted according to Parallelistic Patterns*, F.A.R.M.S., p. 100-101.)

2 Nephi 26:4 **The Day That Cometh Shall Burn Them up:**

Millet and McConkie write that here in 2 Nephi 26:4 Nephi quotes again from the prophet Zenos (cf. 1 Nephi 22:15, 23), just as Malachi would do some two hundred years hence (see Malachi 4:1):

For behold, saith the prophet, the time cometh speedily that Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men; *for the day soon cometh that all the proud and they who do wickedly shall be as stubble; and the day cometh that they must be burned.* (1 Nephi 22:15)

For behold, *the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up*, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. (Malachi 4:1)

In this case, however, Nephi applies Zenos's prophecy of the destruction of the wicked at the time of the second coming of Christ to the cataclysms preceding his appearance to the Nephites. In so doing, Nephi utilizes one of his own cardinal principles of scriptural interpretation, that of likening the scriptures and making application of one oracle to separate but related events.

(Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 1, p. 301.)



Stubble burning

driverlayer.com

2 Nephi 26:12 I Spake concerning the Convincing of the Jews, That Jesus is the Very Christ, It Must Needs Be That the Gentiles Be Convinced Also that Jesus Is the Christ, the Eternal God:

Brant Gardner writes that the Title Page of the Book of Mormon states that this work is “to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations.” Writing nearly a thousand years later, Moroni’s Title Page neatly echoes Nephi’s stated purpose in this verse. Both Jew and Gentile need to know that “Jesus is the very Christ.”

(Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical & Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon*; Volume Two: Second Nephi through Jacob, p. 359.)

Note* This implies that the writings of Nephi on the Small Plates had a telling impact on Moroni. This concept is reflected many times in what Moroni writes in the Book of Ether and the Book of Moroni.

(Alan Miner, Personal Notes)

2 Nephi 26:15---27:35 **(*Prophetic Reworking of Isaiah 29**)**

Victor Ludlow writes that the additional material provided by Nephi in 2 Nephi chapters 26--27 makes the Book of Mormon rendition of Isaiah 29 significantly longer than the biblical text. While Isaiah 29 contains only twenty-four verses in the King James Version, Nephi's version contains fifty-four verses (2 Nephi 26:15---27:35). Ludlow suggests that one possibility for this is that Nephi used "inspired insight" to add to the sections.

2 Nephi 26:15-----27:35 (54 verses) --- Isaiah 29 (24 verses)

(Victor L. Ludlow, *Unlocking Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, p. 203-204.)

2 Nephi 26:15---27:35 **(*Prophetic Reworking of Isaiah 29**)**

Grant Hardy writes that the most significant example of Nephi's reworking of a biblical prophecy comes in 2 Nephi 26-27, where he manages to reproduce the first half of Isaiah 29, in order, within a much longer discourse by inserting phrases here and there. We sometimes speak of "reading between the lines," but here Nephi is "writing between the lines." . . .

However, the significance of the phrases of Isaiah being used by Nephi has shifted, because the context is no longer Sennacherib's invasion of Judah in 701 BC (as it was for Isaiah); instead, Nephi is using the ancient words of Isaiah as a framework for his own prophecy of the eventual destruction of the Nephites and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon in the early nineteenth century. Nephi does not deny the validity of the original, historic meaning of Isaiah's warnings ("I have made mention unto my children concerning the judgments of God, which have come to pass among the Jews, unto my children, according to all that which Isaiah hath spoken, and I do not write them," 2 Nephi 25:6), but Nephi virtually ignores the original setting in favor of reinterpreting the words so that they apply to his own predictions of the distant future ("but behold, I proceed with mine own prophecy, according to my plainness, in the which I know that no man can err," 2 Nephi 25:7). So even though Nephi has just quoted chapters of Isaiah concerning Assyria's attack on Israel and Judah---warnings that had been fulfilled more than a century earlier---he still believes that in some sense Isaiah's visions are as yet unrealized ("in the days that

the prophecies of Isaiah shall be fulfilled, men shall know of a surety, at the time when they shall come to pass,” 2 Nephi 25:7) . . .

It is not unusual for religious traditions that revere particular texts to update the meanings of those writings so that they continue to be relevant in the lives of believers to successive eras—yet it is important to try to understand what Nephi himself thought he was doing within the context of the Book of Mormon narrative. . . .

There is another issue that needs to be addressed: the Book of Mormon’s long quotations from Isaiah inevitably raise questions about the translation/writing process. As we imagine Joseph looking into his seer stone and dictating to his scribes the story and writings of Nephi, it is reasonable to ask why there is so much Isaiah in this part of the Book of Mormon, and in particular why it appears in the language of the King James Bible.

For unbelieving readers who see Joseph Smith as the author of the Book of Mormon, the easiest explanation is that the eighteen chapters of Isaiah in First and Second Nephi are filler, employed when Joseph Smith’s creativity flagged or because he felt the need to pad the narrative so that its size was roughly equivalent to the 116 pages lost by Martin Harris.(n15) Believers, on the other hand, often see the Isaiah portions as preserving a version of Isaiah older and more accurate than anything else available today.(n16) Yet there are puzzling features of Nephi’s patterns of quotation that suggest that both of these explanations are simplistic.

For those who point to Joseph as the author of the Book of Mormon, such a perspective requires an explanation as to why Joseph, unlike nearly everyone else in his religious environment, did not simply quote from Isaiah from the Authorized Version. But rather than the exact text of Isaiah appearing in the book, we find a modified form of the text. About half the quoted verses read differently from the King James Bible. Furthermore, it does not appear that these changes are always the result of intentional revision. Some are indeed inserted clauses or substituted phrases that clarify or expand Isaiah’s words, but there are also a great number of variants that make little or no [apparent] difference to the meaning. These include substituted relative pronouns, transposed words, changes in number, alternative verb forms, omitted articles, and added conjunctions (such as “for” and “yea”).(n17) . . .

It is striking that despite his reworking of Isaiah, Nephi clearly expects that his writings will become scripture, with equal weight to Isaiah’s original words. And while there is a demarcation between the quoted Isaiah passages (2 Nephi chapters 12-24) and Nephi’s own prophecies, the contrast is not the sort of canon/commentary distinction common in the postbiblical world. Instead of commentary, Nephi is offering a new prophecy that is based on or using the words of Isaiah but with a different chronological and historical setting. If some of what he says fits Joseph Smith’s nineteenth-century environment, it also raises questions as to why Nephi’s writings don’t also project the points of emphasis similar to the standard Christological readings of Joseph Smith’s time. Nephi tells us that he is citing Isaiah because Isaiah “saw my Redeemer, even as I

have seen him” (2 Nephi 11:2, cf. 1 Nephi 19:23). Yet even though the chapters of Isaiah that Nephi reproduces include famous references such as Isaiah 7:14 (“a virgin shall conceive”) and Isaiah 9:6 (“for unto us a child is born”), Nephi doesn’t seem to overly focus on them as one would expect if Joseph Smith was the author.

As for Joseph Smith’s part in the Isaiah portions of the Book of Mormon, it is fair to say that there are still many unanswered questions about what constitutes an “inspired translation.” Once one accepts the possibility of divine intervention [that is, when one accepts the fact that Christ has watched over the content of what is now the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Book of Mormon], the theology can accommodate the [always tentative] results of scholarship.(n31)

[Note* This concept of “divine intervention” is especially significant when we consider that scriptural record keepers like Nephi, Jacob, Joseph Smith, Isaiah, Mormon, Moroni and Paul all claimed to have visionary experiences with Christ as their teacher while viewing the history of the world from the beginning to the end. Each prophet was given their calling by Christ, and so it is not too difficult for me to reason that while all these prophets had what could be described as a similar vision, each took from that vision a different perspective, specifically suited to his calling, his people, and his relative time in the history of the world. And in each case, Christ would have been “looking over their shoulder” as they wrote their records. (Alan Miner, Personal Notes)]

Grant Hardy writes that however one chooses to account for the parallel passages of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon and the Bible, it is clear that the Book of Mormon offers something of a “midrash” on Isaiah. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion* defines midrash as “the discovery of meanings other than literal in the Bible; derived from the root *darash* (inquire). It denotes the literature that interprets scripture in order to extract its full implications and meaning. These interpretations often formed a response to the need of a particular age or environment.” . . . But Hardy also states that “the appeal of the Book of Mormon is due in large part to the construction of Nephi as a unique and compelling voice.”

(Grant Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, p. 64-70.)

[Note* The Restoration not only added to our knowledge taken from the Bible, but it also certainly challenged what was termed “literal” about the text of the Bible. Other biblical verses now seemed to clarify, modify, and in some cases change the previous “literal” interpretation of Isaiah. Moreover, the placing of the so-called “intact” Isaiah “chapters” in the context of the teachings of all the other Book of Mormon prophets similarly challenged in a number of instances the previous “literal” interpretation of Isaiah’s writings. Yet I can see what Grant Hardy’s point is regarding a “midrash.” (Alan Miner, Personal Notes)]

2 Nephi 26:15---27:35 (***Prophetic Reworking of Isaiah 29****)

Brant Gardner notes that as Nephi develops this section on his plates (chapters 26—27), he interweaves his own understanding with that of Isaiah. He will quote or reference Isaiah 29:3-24, but he will not use it as a foundation text as he has done with the chapters he previously inserted (for example: Isaiah chapters 2-14 were inserted almost verbatim as 2 Nephi chapters 12-24). Instead Nephi will completely incorporate text from Isaiah into his vision, making Isaiah's prophecy part of his own.

Gardner compares the changes almost verse by verse. The following is a brief outline:

26:15 apocalyptic for the Nephites

Isaiah 29:3,4,5 apocalyptic for the Gentiles

26:16 "out of the dust" means from those who are dead

Isaiah 29:4 "low out of the dust" means humility

26:17 Nephi's declaration of authority to alter Isaiah Nephi links the "sealed book" with those from out of the dust.

Isaiah 29:11 is recast

26:18-19 Nephi's people's destruction

Isaiah 29:5 Destruction of the Jews

26:20 Gentiles lifted up

Echoes Isaiah 5:21. also Isaiah 10:1-2

26:22 Flaxen cord

Not in Isaiah, but it echoes Isaiah 5:18

26:23 ---29 Nephi directly addresses his "beloved brethren" about the Messiah. He uses "I say" five times.

[26:25 is a paraphrase of Isaiah 55:1]

26:30 "except they should have charity they were nothing"

Resembles 1 Corinthians 13:2

26:33 concludes Nephi's interpolation "bond and free, male and female"

Echoes Galatians 3:28

27:1-2 Gospel coming to Gentiles in latter days

27:3 those who "fight against Zion"

Reworking of Isaiah 29:7-8 "nations that fight against Ariel (Jerusalem)

27:4 wicked drunken with iniquity

Follows Isaiah 29:9 about Ariel

27:5 "deep sleep"

Follows Isaiah 29:10 but reprises Isaiah 6:9-10

27:6 "words of a book"

Resetting of Isaiah 29:11

27:7-16 book "sealed" Nephi expands every line of the Isaiah verse

Expansion of Isaiah 29:11

27:17-19 "unlearned" then "learned" Nephi reverses the order

Based on Isaiah 29:11-12

27:20 "learned shall not read them"

27:21-23 "touch them not" (*represents specific instructions to Joseph Smith*)

27:24-25 Nephi resets the prophecy

Reprises Isaiah 29:13

27:26 "marvelous work & wonder

Minor changes to Isaiah 29:14

27:27 "works are in the dark" "turning things upside down"

Reworking of Isaiah 29:15-16

27:28-29

closely follow Isaiah 29:17-18

27:30-31

essentially identical to Isaiah 29:19-20

27:32-33

follow Isaiah 29:21-22

27:34-35

identical to Isaiah 29:23-24

Gardner notes that Nephi views the Isaiah passages as being directly relevant to his vision to provide a more complete picture of his own visionary revelation. Although Nephi is citing Isaiah's apocalyptic prophecy concerning Israel, the words are also accurate for Nephi's people.

(Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical & Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon*; Volume Two: Second Nephi through Jacob, p. 360-399.)

Note* I think it fitting here to reiterate what Nephi states in 2 Nephi 3:5-6 that the ancient Joseph of Egypt "truly saw our day" and that the Lord truly said unto him: "a choice seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins." Nephi also noted in 2 Nephi 11:2 that one of the main reasons that he "delights" in the words of Isaiah is because Isaiah had seen (and conversed) with the Lord like Nephi. I will also add Mormon, Moroni, Paul and Joseph Smith to this list. With such shared visions of all ages of the world, each prophet of each dispensation interprets (in fact he is obligated to interpret) these visions and the words of Christ to him in light of his own responsibilities to his covenant people. (Alan Miner, Personal Notes)

2 Nephi 26:15 **"Forts"**

Brant Gardner writes that the Lamanites were Nephi's equivalent for the Gentiles of Isaiah. In addition to the Lamanite armies, Nephi's quotation of Isaiah's "forts" may also have been relevant. Mesoamerican archaeology has uncovered fortified cities, and the militarized Early Classic period (A.D. 250-600) corresponding with the Nephites' demise could easily be a time where "forts" were raised against Nephite cities. There is evidence of forts in Mesoamerica as early as the Preclassic period (500 B.C. – A.D. 250).

[Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical & Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon*; Volume Two: Second Nephi through Jacob, pp. 360-361]

2 Nephi 26:16 **Their Voice Shall Be As One That Hath a *Familiar Spirit*:**

In Nephi's predictions concerning the last days, he prophesies that after his seed has dwindled in unbelief, and has been smitten by the Gentiles, and has been brought down low in the dust, those who shall be destroyed "shall speak unto them out of the ground . . . and their voice shall be as one that hath a familiar spirit" (2 Nephi 26:16). Some might recognize the phrases which Nephi uses as similar to those found in Isaiah 29:1-4 and wonder if Nephi's usage is correct because the words "familiar spirit" are used in the King James Version of the Old Testament to designate witchcraft.

A study by Robert Cloward (see *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, 1998) has found that the translators of the KJV took great liberties in construing statements about "them that have familiar spirits" as referring to spirit mediums, even when that is not always intended in the Hebrew. One should note that the Hebrew expression translated "familiar spirit" more correctly refers to a ghost. ["Book of Mormon Answers" in Journal of Book of Mormon Studies, Vol. 7/1, November 1998, p. 74]

2 Nephi 26:16 **Their Voice Shall Be As One That Hath a Familiar Spirit:**

(See KnoWhy #491 How Are the Words of the Book of Mormon Like "One That Hath a Familiar Spirit"?)

www.bookofmormoncentral.org)

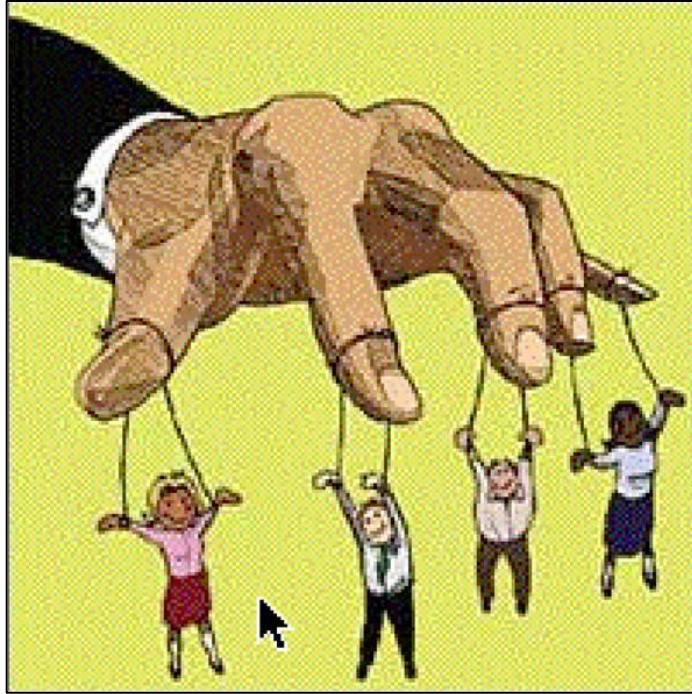
2 Nephi 26:22 **He Leadeth Them By the Neck with a Flaxen Cord:**

Nephi notes that the devil "leadeth them by the neck with a flaxen cord" (2 Nephi 26:22). Flax is the oldest of textile fibers, and is used to make fine linen (*The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, vol. 1, p. 509). If a flaxen cord is made of thin light strands (*Book of Mormon Gospel Doctrine Teacher's Manual*, 1999, p. 43), and if leading one about with a cord around his neck implies bondage or slavery, then the message here is that the Devil very cleverly leads people about with a thin light cord according to their seemingly innocent prideful indulgences and unpunished secret acts until he has firmly secured their bondage with "stronger cords" and later even heavier "chains" according to the weightier sins that they have progressively fallen into. A more modern but similar phrase would be that "people were led about like puppets on a string" but that doesn't convey the associated and progressive bondage.

[Alan C. Miner, Personal Notes]

Brant Gardner notes that there are Mesoamerican examples of the practice of leading someone by the neck with a cord. For example, a bas relief of Itzamnaaj B'alam III receiving a group of three captives that comes from "an unidentified site dubbed Laxtunich." (Simon Martin and Nikolai Grube, *Chronicle of the Maya Kings and Queens*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2000, p. 135)

[Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical & Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon*; Volume Two: Second Nephi through Jacob, p. 366 note 11.]



Like puppets on a string

seminolewatch.com



A Captive led by a rope around his neck

lloydhovland.com

2 Nephi 26:24 **He Layeth Down His Own Life That He May Draw All Men unto Him:**

(See KnowWhy #422 Why the Book of Mormon's Depiction of a Loving God Fits with the Old Testament

www.bookofmormoncentral.org)

2 Nephi 26:25 **Every One That Thirsteth, Come Ye to the Waters:**



Dan River

israelimages.com

2 Nephi 26:25 **Every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters (Illustration):** The Dan River in northern Galilee. Just as the waters of the Dan River, the chief tributary to the Jordan River, have brought life for thousands of years to hundreds of thousands of people, so does Jesus Christ bring spiritual life to all who come to him, the living waters. Photograph by Arnold H. Green. (Donald W. Parry, *Visualizing Isaiah*, p. 94.)

2 Nephi 26:26 **Synagogues:**

According to William Adams, the term *synagogue* (including the plural) occurs twenty-five

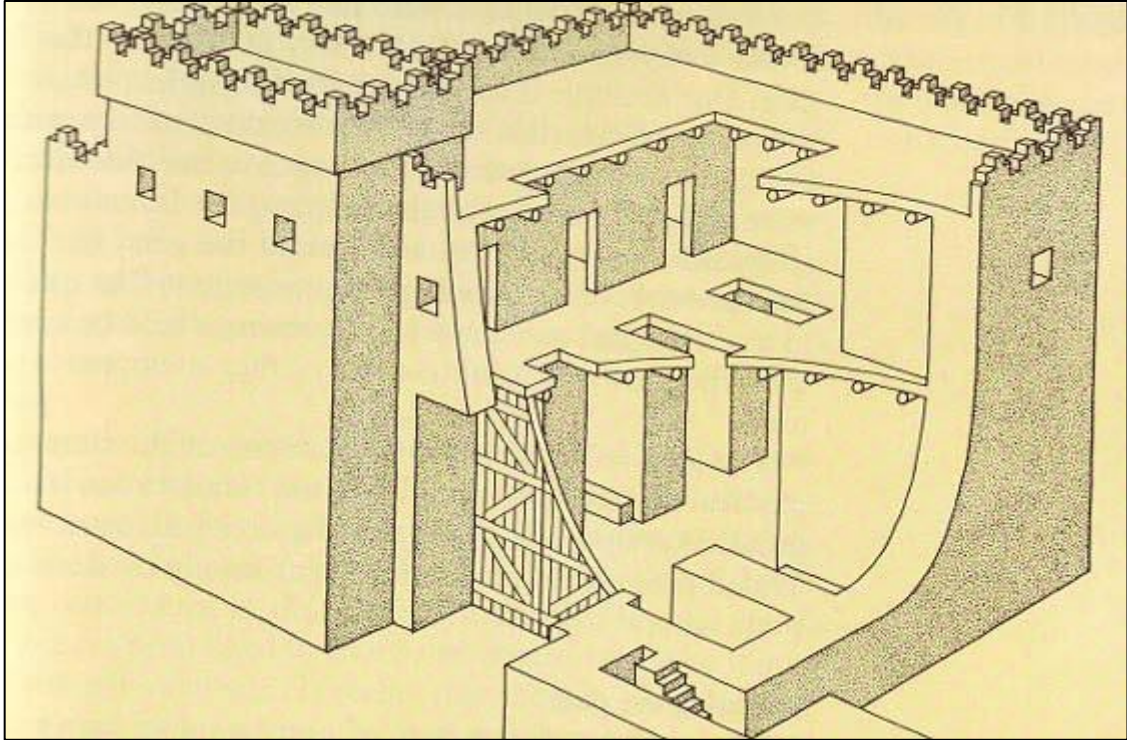
times in the Book of Mormon. The first is found in a sermon by Nephi: "Behold, hath he commanded any that they should depart out of the synagogues, or out of the houses of worship? (2 Nephi 26:26)

This passage is only a few decades from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem. Hence it appears that he and his family brought the already existing concept with them to America. This passage also suggests that synagogues were used for worship in Nephi's day. This raises the question: How did Nephites worship? A number of later passages describe visitors preaching and teaching in synagogues (see Alma 16:13; 21:4,5,16; 26:29; 32:1; Moroni 7:1). Public discussions of scripture topics in the synagogues were evidently a part of that teaching and preaching (see Alma 21:5,11). Prayer apparently was also a part of the worship (see Alma 31:12-14 on Zoramite worship). This last passage also suggests that synagogue worship was held on only one day of the week and that people had the misconception that God could be worshiped only on that day and only in a synagogue (see Alma 32:2,5,9,10,12; 33:2). Other aberrant synagogue worship practices are mentioned in a sermon given by Jesus in 3 Nephi wherein he denounced public almsgiving and loud praying both in synagogues and in the streets (see 3 Nephi 13:2,5). A related term in the Book of Mormon is *church*. However, the two hundred plus occurrences of *church / churches* in the Book of Mormon seem to point to a movement or organization rather than a building. The single exception is 4 Nephi 1:41, wherein the word *churches* seems to refer to structures that people could adorn.

Perhaps one can gain perspective on Book of Mormon synagogues by studying biblical synagogues. One aspect of our understanding of biblical synagogues that has been reevaluated in the light of new research is the view that synagogues did not exist until after the Babylonian captivity. Lee I. Levine, a leading scholar on the history of the synagogue, has suggested that synagogues did exist before the Babylonian captivity in the form of chambers in the city gates.ⁱⁱⁱ Such gates have been excavated by archaeologists at such important Old Testament sites as Beersheba,^{iv} Gezer,^v Lachish,^{vi} and Megiddo.^{vii}

Each of these has:

1. at least one chamber (which is nearly square) lined with stone benches around the interior walls (the benched chamber at Lachish has two tiers of benches,
2. a single doorway, and
3. a niche perhaps used as storage for ritual or sacred items (where there is enough of the original wall left to determine it).



A model of a gateway similar to that of Lachish

bible-architecture.info/Lachish



The excavated gateway to the city of Lachish

bible-architecture.info/Lachish

Levine concludes that since later synagogues closely mirror the architecture of the gate chambers, these chambers may well have been the original synagogues. This conclusion is supported by a number of biblical passages that indicate that the city gate and its vicinity were the hub of a community's life. The gate area served as:

1. the market place (see 2 Kings 7:1),
2. the general court (see Genesis 23:10,18; Deuteronomy 17:5, 21:19 and 22:24; Ruth 4:1-12; Jeremiah 38:7; Daniel 2:48-49; and Esther 5:9,13; 6:10,
3. the royal court (see 2 Samuel 18:4 and 19:8; and 1 Kings 22:10, which equals 2 Chronicles 18:9), and
4. a place of worship (see 2 Kings 23:8 and Nehemiah 8:1).^{viii}

If Levine is correct, then, before the captivity, a town's or city's social activities centered around the city gate, and it seems reasonable that these social activities included Sabbath worship in a chamber of the gate that resembled later synagogues and functioned similarly. Unfortunately, in the Book of Mormon the worship aspect of synagogues is mentioned only incidentally, while other functions were apparently not considered germane to the overall objective of the Small Plates or Mormon's abridgment.

(William J. Adams Jr., "Synagogues in the Book of Mormon," in *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, Vol. 9, Num. 1, p. 6-13.) [See the commentary on Alma 16:13, 21:4-5, 31:12]

2 Nephi 26:29 **Priestcraft:**

According to Daniel Ludlow, the word "priestcraft" is used in the Book of Mormon to refer to the teachings of those people who would make a craft (or business) out of being a priest (or religious leader) to the people. Nephi indicates one danger of priestcraft is that such professional religious leaders would be more concerned with teaching those things which were popular and acceptable unto the people than they would in preaching the word of God. Thus they seek to "get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion" (2 Nephi 26:29).

(Daniel H. Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, p. 146.)

Chapter 27

2 Nephi 27 Heading **Compare Isaiah 29 (Nephi's "Likening" of Isaiah 29):**

John Tvedtnes writes that parts of Isaiah 28 and 29 are interspersed throughout 2 Nephi 25-29. Some of these are direct quotes (often with variations), followed by commentary, while others are paraphrases (also with commentary in many cases). Some critics have attacked Joseph Smith, saying that he deliberately altered Isaiah 29 in 2 Nephi 27 in order to back his own story (that of Martin Harris' visit to Prof. Anthon, as recorded in JS-H 1:63-65). But a careful reading of 2 Nephi 27 will reveal that this is not a transcription of Isaiah 29, but, rather, a *midrash* or scriptural commentary. After quoting Isaiah chapters 2-14 (as found in 2 Nephi 12-24), Nephi proposes to,

 speak somewhat concerning the words which I have written, which have been spoken by the mouth of Isaiah. For behold, Isaiah spake many things which were hard for many of my people to understand . . . [but] because of the words of Isaiah are not plain unto you, nevertheless they are plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy (2 Nephi 25:1, 4)

The subsequent verses outline his intention to pursue the matter, giving Isaiah's prophecies meaning by use of his own revelations and prophecies. Because many of Nephi's Isaiah quotes are paraphrased and intermingled with his own thoughts in these chapters, it should not be surprising to see the Book of Mormon version of Isaiah 29 quite at variance with the King James Version. Nephi and some of the other prophets of the Book of Mormon were fully aware of the purpose for which they were making their record. They knew of Joseph Smith's future mission, and it is by no means accidental that Nephi here refers in part to that mission, by drawing upon the prophecies of Isaiah. Some of parts of Isaiah 28 and 29 which are interspersed throughout 2 Nephi 25-29 are as follows:

2 Nephi 25:1	(Isaiah 11:11 + 29:14)
2 Nephi 26:15	(Isaiah 29:3)
2 Nephi 26:15-16	(Isaiah 29:4)
2 Nephi 26:18	(Isaiah 29:5)
2 Nephi 27:2-5	(Isaiah 29:6-10)
2 Nephi 27:6-9	(Isaiah 29:4, 11)
2 Nephi 27:15-19	(Isaiah 29:11-12)
2 Nephi 28:9	(Isaiah 29:13, 15)
2 Nephi 28:14	(Isaiah 29:13)
2 Nephi 28:16	(Isaiah 29:21)
2 Nephi 28:30	(Isaiah 28:10 or 13)

(John A. Tvedtnes, "The Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon," FARMS, p. 60-61.)

2 Nephi 27 Heading **Compare Isaiah 29 (Nephi's "Likening" of Isaiah 29)**

In 2 Nephi 27, we find much of what appears to be Isaiah 29. In fact, the present chapter heading in the 1981 edition tells the reader to "compare Isaiah 29." However, according to Robert Cloward, what we find in 2 Nephi 27 is not Isaiah 29, it is Nephi's "likening" of Isaiah 29 to his own circumstances, formulating an original prophecy that gave the old scripture new significance and saw fulfillment in the Book of Mormon. . . .

Before examining exactly how and where Isaiah 29 appears in the Book of Mormon, it is vital to study it in its biblical context; then it will become clear how Book of Mormon writers applied Isaiah's words to truths they understood about themselves. This process, which Nephi and Jacob call "likening," was in part their justification for using Isaiah's words (see 1 Nephi 19:23-24; 22:8; 2 Nephi 6:5; 11:2; 11:8). Not only did they delight in "likening" scripture to themselves, they urged this process upon later readers as well. Their "likening" of Isaiah 29 provides a most interesting illustration of how this is done. . . .

Isaiah 29 is not a long chapter, but its message is clear to the Jews: The Lord announces the destruction of Jerusalem and the death of her people as his response to pride and hypocritical worship. Then he foretells the miraculous era when he will revive and restore Jerusalem and the house of Jacob, calling this restoration "a marvellous work and a wonder." . . .

There is a direct correlation of Isaiah's prophecy in 29:1-4, 6 with the 587 B.C. destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon. Isaiah's continuing prophecy in 29:5,7-8 can be matched with the subsequent vanquishing of Babylon's power by the Medes and the Persians (see Isaiah 13-14, 21, 41, 43-48). History tells us that in 536 B.C., Cyrus the Great of Persia allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple (see Isaiah 44:28; 45:1; compare 2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra 1, 3), but evidently this was not the restoration Isaiah prophesied in 29:14,17-24. The books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Malachi indicate that, for the most part, Jerusalem's prophets, rulers, and seers were still "covered" during the sixth through the fourth centuries B.C., and "the vision of all" was still like the words of a *sealed* book. . . . Additionally, passages in the New Testament (Matthew 15:7-9; Mark 7:6-7; Romans 11:8) also imply that despite their return from Babylon, the Jews of the New Testament era were still in the state of blindness and stupor that Isaiah had foreseen. . . .

The Romans (which helped fulfill the "woe" and "destruction" prophesied) eventually declined and became "as a dream of a night vision" (Isaiah 29:7). . . . Nevertheless, the question still remained, what about the Jerusalem and her people as prophesied in Isaiah 29:17-24 which

talks about "a marvellous work and a wonder"?

According to Cloward, a comparison of these verses of prophecy related to a "marvellous work and a wonder" with the present condition of Jerusalem and the Jews reveals that most of these prophecies have not yet been fulfilled. The Lord promised a reversal of Jerusalem's physical and spiritual destruction, but today the hearts of Jerusalem's people are still far removed from him. Their fear toward him is still taught by the precept of men. He has not yet made them the work of his hands so that they "sanctify the Holy One of Jacob" and "fear the God of Israel," the Great Jehovah, Jesus Christ (Isaiah 29:23).

Isaiah lamented in Isaiah 29:11 that the vision of Jerusalem's people had become *as the words of a sealed book*. No specific book is mentioned because Isaiah's concern was the lost vision of his people *not* a book. His expression is symbolic--a simile, one of many similes and metaphors in Isaiah 29. Isaiah's symbolic sealed book is still sealed today. Jerusalem's vision has not yet been opened. Her people that erred in spirit have not yet come to understanding and they that murmured have not yet learned doctrine (see Isaiah 29:24).

It was Nephi who made Isaiah's symbolic book into a literal book. Nephi "likened" the symbolic book in Isaiah's simile to a literal, specific record the Lord had commanded him to write on gold plates. Nephi also foretold the latter-day role of his record in restoring vision, understanding, and doctrine to the house of Israel. To understand how this would occur, readers must turn to the Book of Mormon.

In 2 Nephi 25:4 Nephi declares:

. . . for because the words of Isaiah are not plain unto you, nevertheless they are plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy. But I give unto you a prophecy, according to the spirit which is in me; wherefore I shall prophesy according to the plainness which hath been with me from the time that I came out from Jerusalem with my father; for behold, my soul delighteth in plainness unto my people, that they may learn.

After the lengthy quotation of Isaiah 2-14 (contained in 2 Nephi 12-24), the text of the Book of Mormon indicates a clear break at 2 Nephi 25:1. There, Nephi begins his "own prophecy,"^{ix} comprising six chapters, 2 Nephi 25-30. Nephi's "own prophecy" is easily definable in the text.^x It has a distinct introduction in 2 Nephi 25:1-8 and a distinct end statement in 2 Nephi 30:18. The body of the prophecy contains two major sections. The first, in 2 Nephi 25:9-20, speaks of the Lord's dealings with the Jews, and the second, in 2 Nephi 25:21--30:18, broadens into his dealings with the Nephites, Lamanites, and Gentiles, and the role of the Book of Mormon in the last days.

In Nephi's "own prophecy" he uses many words and themes from the just-quoted chapters of Isaiah (2 Nephi 12-24--Isaiah 2-14). He also uses words and themes from other

chapters of Isaiah, including many words that sound like Isaiah 29. . . . In essence, Nephi's "own prophecy" displays his total mastery of Isaiah's concepts and doctrines. No one with cursory knowledge could have written this. Because he knows them intimately, Nephi can integrate Isaiah's complex teachings into his likening in such a way that they become "plain."

As for Nephi's likening of Isaiah 29, the words which sound like Isaiah 29 are found in:

2 Nephi 25:17;
2 Nephi 26:3,6,15-18;
2 Nephi 27:1-7,15,17,19,25-35;
2 Nephi 28:9,14,16,20,31;
2 Nephi 29:1

Nephi attributes none of these verses to Isaiah. In fact, he repeatedly claims the words as his own or attributes them to the Lord.^{xi} . . . In 2 Nephi 27, Nephi adds a wealth of prophetic detail not found in Isaiah--about events that will occur thousand of years after his time. . . .

Once Nephi had likened the words of Isaiah 29 to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the Nephites accepted this likening as the standard interpretation of Isaiah's words for them, and they passed that interpretation down from generation to generation. At the end of his contribution to the Book of Mormon, Nephi wrote: "I speak unto you as the voice of one crying from the dust: Farewell until that great day shall come" (2 Nephi 33:13). This is an obvious allusion to Isaiah 29. In the final portions of the Book of Mormon, Moroni referred twice at length to Nephi's version of Isaiah 29 (see Mormon 8:23, 26-27, 29-30; and Moroni 10:27). Moreover, Moroni later introduced Nephi's likened version of Isaiah 29 (not the Jewish version) to the latter-day dispensation when he appeared in 1823 to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

(Robert A. Cloward, "Isaiah 29 and the Book of Mormon," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, p. 191-214.)

2 Nephi 27:1-5 (**Chiastic Structure**):

The reader should note that the messages of Nephi 27:1-5 (and of Isaiah 29:6-10) are prophetically strengthened because these prophecies appear in chiastic form. However, the chiasm in the Book of Mormon is more complete, more understandable, and adapted for the last days. It becomes a prologue for Nephi's prophetic words on the coming forth of a book which is sealed (the Book of Mormon). In Isaiah's prophecy concerning the fate of the Jews at Jerusalem, however, the book really remained sealed.

It becomes clear that Joseph Smith didn't just copy some words from Isaiah into his manuscript on a whim. The person who wrote this section of the Book of Mormon would have had to have an understanding of chiasms in prophetic writings. The reader is invited to compare

the chiastic structure of the Book of Mormon with the words of Isaiah 29:6-10. Donald W. Parry gives the following chiastic structure for 2 Nephi 27:1-5:

But, behold, in the last days, or in the days of the Gentiles--
yea, behold all the nations of the Gentiles
and also the Jews,
both those who shall come upon this land
and those who shall be upon other lands,
yea, even upon all the lands of the earth,

- A. behold, they will be drunken
- B. with iniquity and all manner of abominations--
And when that day shall come they shall be visited of the Lord of Hosts,
with thunder
and with earthquake,
and with a great noise,
and with storm,
and with tempest,
and with the flame of devouring fire.
- C. And all the nations that fight against Zion, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a
night vision; yea, it shall be unto them,
- D. a. even as unto a hungry man which dreameth,
b. and behold he eateth
c. but he awaketh
d. and his soul is empty;
- D' a. or like unto a thirsty man which dreameth,
b. and behold he drinketh
c. but he awaketh and behold he is faint,
d. and his soul hath appetite; (*extended alternate*)
- C' yea, even so shall the multitude of all the nations be that fight against Mount Zion
- B' For behold, all ye that doeth iniquity, stay yourselves and wonder, for ye shall cry out, and cry
- A' a. yea, ye shall be drunken (*simple alternate*)
b. but not with wine,
a. ye shall stagger
b. but not with strong drink. For behold, the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep.
a. For behold, ye have closed your eyes,
b. and ye have rejected the prophets;
b' and your rulers,
a' and the seers hath he covered because of your iniquity.

And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall bring forth unto you the words of a book, and they shall be the words of them which have slumbered. And behold the book shall be sealed; and in the book shall be a revelation from God, from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof.

(Donald W. Parry, *The Book of Mormon Text Reformatted according to Parallelistic Patterns*, F.A.R.M.S., p. 102-103.)

Note* The reader should be aware that I have taken the liberty to slightly modify the structure of the last part of the chiasm (step B' and A') from what appears in Parry's book. (Alan C. Miner, Personal Notes)

2 Nephi 27:2 **With Thunder and with . . . and with . . . and with . . . and with:**

Scholars have found that Book of Mormon passages apparently from the King James Version of the Bible contain variants corroborated in other biblical manuscript texts. Franklin Harris writes: "To Isaiah 29:6 the Book of Mormon (2 Nephi 27:2) reads "and with" for "and" in four places. The Syriac reads as the Book of Mormon suggests.

(Franklin S. Harris, Jr., *The Book of Mormon: Messages and Evidences*, p. 50-52.)

2 Nephi 27:3 **And All the Nations That Fight Against Zion . . . :**

Brant Gardner notes that Nephi restructures the introduction to apply specifically to Zion rather than to Ariel (another name for Jerusalem) which is found in Isaiah 29:7.

More importantly, this passage is not simply altering, adding, or a thematic reworking of Isaiah's original. Such a reworking cannot be explained as a difference in translation. It is well crafted, however, taking literary themes and weaving them together into a new fabric.

What Nephi is doing corresponds to the later practice called "pesher." Robert Wiseman, professor of Middle East religions and archaeology at California State University Long Beach, and coauthor of *The Facsimile Edition of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, explains how *pesher* functioned in the Dead Sea Scrolls:

A *pesher* is a commentary—at Qumran, a commentary on a well-known biblical passage, usually from the Prophets, but also from Psalms and sometimes even other biblical books like Genesis, Leviticus, or Deuteronomy. The important thing is that the underlying biblical passage being interpreted should be seen as fraught with significance in relation to the ideology or history of the Scroll Community. Often this takes the form of citing a

biblical passage or quotation out of context or even sometimes slightly altered, followed by the words, “*peshet*” or “*peshet ha-diver*,” meaning “its interpretation” or “the interpretation of the passage is.” The text then proceeds to give an idiosyncratic interpretation having to do with the history or ideology of the group, with particular reference to contemporary events. (Robert Eisenman, *James the Brother of Jesus*, NY: Penguin Books, 1997, p. 81.)

This description is similar to what Nephi is doing with Isaiah. Unlike the sections where Nephi is quoting Isaiah, here he uses Isaiah as a springboard to his own vision for the future, sifting contexts, and reworking meanings so that Isaiah’s prophecy becomes part of Nephi’s prophetic dream of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

(Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical & Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon; Volume Two: Second Nephi through Jacob*, p. 377.)

2 Nephi 27:6 The Lord God Shall Bring Forth unto You the Words of a Book:

According to Robert Cloward, 2 Nephi 27:6 announces, "The Lord God shall bring forth unto you the words of a book." This is very different from the corresponding wording of Isaiah 29:11. Isaiah's sealed book represented the obscurity of his people's vision, a negative image. In Nephi's prophecy, his partly sealed and partly unsealed book is always positive. From the first mention of it, Nephi's book is the future hope for his people. Isaiah's book is symbolic. Nephi's book is literal, real, tangible. Unlike those of Isaiah's, the words of Nephi's book, at least those of the unsealed part, are read.

(Robert A. Cloward, "Isaiah 29 and the Book of Mormon," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, p. 209.)

2 Nephi 27:7 And Behold the Book Shall Be Sealed:

In 2 Nephi 27:7-11, the book that the Lord God "shall bring forth unto you" is spoken of as being "sealed." Because a portion of the gold plates obtained by Joseph Smith was sealed, we have generally identified that portion as the sealed book spoken of in Isaiah 29 and 2 Nephi 27. However, neither Isaiah nor Nephi clearly differentiate between the sealed and unsealed portions of the book. It may be that the "seal" Nephi was speaking of is that the message of the Book of Mormon (even the unsealed and published part) is "sealed" to anyone without faith, to anyone who trusts in the learning of the world and rejects the revelations of God.

Although the book itself (meaning the gold plates) would be "hid from the world," the message of the book (except the sealed portion) is to go forth to all the world.

(Robert J. Matthews, "Two Ways in the World," in *Studies in Scripture: Book of Mormon*, Part 1, p. 154-155.) [See the commentary on Ether 3:25]

2 Nephi 27:7 And Behold the Book Shall Be Sealed:

(See KnoWhy #53 Why Would a Book Be Sealed?
www.bookofmormoncentral.org)

2 Nephi 27:7 The Book Shall Be a Revelation from God, from the Beginning of the World to the Ending Thereof:

[See the commentary on Ether 3:25]



deburchtsion.blogspot.com

2 Nephi 27:9 But the book shall be delivered unto a man [Joseph Smith] (Illustration – not shown):

Moroni Delivering the Golden Plates. Joseph Smith, the man Isaiah speaks of in chapter 27, verse 9, wrote: "On the twenty-second day of September, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven, having gone as usual at the end of another year to the place where they [the plates] were deposited, the same heavenly messenger [Moroni] delivered them up to me" (Joseph Smith--History 1:59). Artist: Gary Kapp. (Thomas R. Valletta ed., *The Book of Mormon for Latter-day Saint Families*, 1999, p. 136.)

2 Nephi 27:12 Three Witness Shall Behold [the Plates] by the Power of God:

According to Stan Larson, while it is true that both 2 Nephi 27:12 and Ether 5:2-4 speak of the three witnesses, Joseph Smith specifies that it was the former passage that brought the idea of witnesses to the attention of those who were assisting him. (See the "Manuscript History of Joseph Smith," p. 23, in which the reference is to page 110 of the 1830 edition, which was the eleventh chapter of 2 Nephi in that edition and corresponds to 2 Nephi 27 of the present edition.) (Stan Larson, "A Most Sacred Possession," *The Ensign*, September 1977, p. 91.)



Oliver Cowdery,

David Whitmer,

Martin Harris.

lds.org

2 Nephi 27:12 **Three witnesses shall behold it (Illustration – not shown):** Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, Martin Harris. The Lord provided witnesses to testify and establish His word. The Three Witnesses--Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris--testified that an angel of God showed them the gold plates of the Book of Mormon. (Thomas R. Valletta ed., *The Book of Mormon for Latter-day Saint Families*, 1999, p. 137.)

2 Nephi 27:12–13 A Few According to the Will of God

(See KnowWhy #54 Who Are the "Few" Who Were Permitted to See the Plates?
www.bookofmormoncentral.org)

2 Nephi 27:15 Take These Words Which Are Not Sealed and Deliver Them to Another, That He May Show Them unto the Learned:

According to the prophecies of Nephi, "it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall say

unto him to whom he shall deliver the book: Take these words which are not sealed and deliver them to another, that he may show them unto the learned, saying: Read this, I pray thee" (2 Nephi 27:15). Joseph Smith gave an account of the fulfillment of this prophecy of 2 Nephi 27:9-18:

Sometime in this month of February, the aforementioned Mr. Martin Harris came to our place, got the characters which I had drawn off the plates, and started with them to the city of New York. For what took place relative to him and the characters, I refer to his own account of the circumstances, as he related them to me after his return, which was as follows: "I went to the city of New York, and presented the characters which had been translated, with the translation thereof, to Professor Charles Anthon, a gentleman celebrated for his literary attainments. Professor Anthon stated that the translation was correct, more so than any he had before seen translated from the Egyptian. I then shewed him those which were not yet translated, and he said that they were Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac, and Arabic; and he said that they were true characters. He gave me a certificate certifying to the people of Palmyra that they were true characters and that the translation of such of them as had been translated was also correct. I took the certificate and put it into my pocket, and was just leaving the house, when Mr. Anthon called me back, and asked me how the young man found out that there were gold plates in the place where he found them. I answered that an angel of God had revealed it unto him. He then said to me, 'Let me see that certificate.' I accordingly took it out of my pocket and gave it to him, when he took it and tore it to pieces, saying that there was no such thing now as ministering of angels, and that if I would bring the plates to him he would translate them. I informed him that part of the plates were sealed, and that I was forbidden to bring them. He replied, 'I cannot read a sealed book.' I left him and went to Dr. Mitchell, who sanctioned what Professor Anthon had said respecting both the characters and the translation." (*Pearl of Great Price*, JS-H 1:63-65.)

In a F.A.R.M.S. 72-page overview of this incident, with accompanying appendices, we find the following: (1) the accounts and illustrations of the meeting of Martin Harris and Charles Anthon; (2) reasoning which shows that Harris probably told the truth about Anthon's mention of Egyptian resemblances to the Book of Mormon characters, and (3) illustrations of Egyptian available to Anthon by 1828 that were comparable in form and arrangement to the Anthon Transcript.

We can tell that Martin Harris was telling the truth because of the descriptive term "short-hand Egyptian" which he used to relate his story. Based solely on the books and illustrations which we know were readily available to Anthon, the characters Harris showed him could have reminded him of nothing so much as what the scholars were then calling "short-hand Egyptian." . . . Thus it becomes highly probable that Harris indeed got this phrase from Anthon, and that Anthon *did mention* "short-hand Egyptian," no doubt struck by certain obvious similarities in the transcript to hieratic or demotic Egyptian. From this, what else can one conclude, except that Martin Harris has been telling the truth all along about what Charles Anthon said on this point.

Charles Anthon's side of the story breaks down in a number of ways, as has long been pointed out. For example, on whether he gave Martin Harris a written statement: Anthon's 1834 letter to Eber D. Howe says that he *did not*, while his 1841 letter to T. W. Coit says that he *did*. On how convincing he had been, Anthon's 1834 letter simply says that Harris "took his leave," but his 1841 letter claims that Harris left with the "express declaration" that he would not mortgage his farm or have anything to do with printing the golden book. What else can one say from Harris' subsequent conduct, except that Harris left Anthon fully satisfied?

Although the only surviving Anthon Transcript (1) may not be the original, (2) has not been deciphered, and (3) is too short for decoding; several Egyptologists have thought that it contains many readily recognizable Egyptian cursive characters. When reached at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, the late Dr. W. C. Hayes thought it "conceivably" a poor copy of a Hieratic original. Professor Richard A. Parker, who had advised Ariel L. Crowley in his presentation of a comparison of Egyptian and Anthon transcript signs in the Improvement Era in 1942 and 1944, later stated in person to Professor Richard L. Bushman his opinion that the transcript was a copy of an authentic original in abnormal Demotic--suggesting and demonstrating to Bushman the similarity to Meroitic Demotic--noting in each case that Egyptian script was apparently being used for a non-Egyptian language. It is very important here to distinguish between *language* and *script*, just as Parker did in his conversation with Bushman, because that is exactly what Nephi, Mormon, and Moroni did in the Book of Mormon (1 Nephi 1:2; Mormon 9:32-34; Ether 8:9) [F.A.R.M.S. Staff, "Martin Harris' Visit with Charles Anthon: Collected Documents on the Anthon Transcript and "Shorthand Egyptian," p. 1, 2, 4-7.]

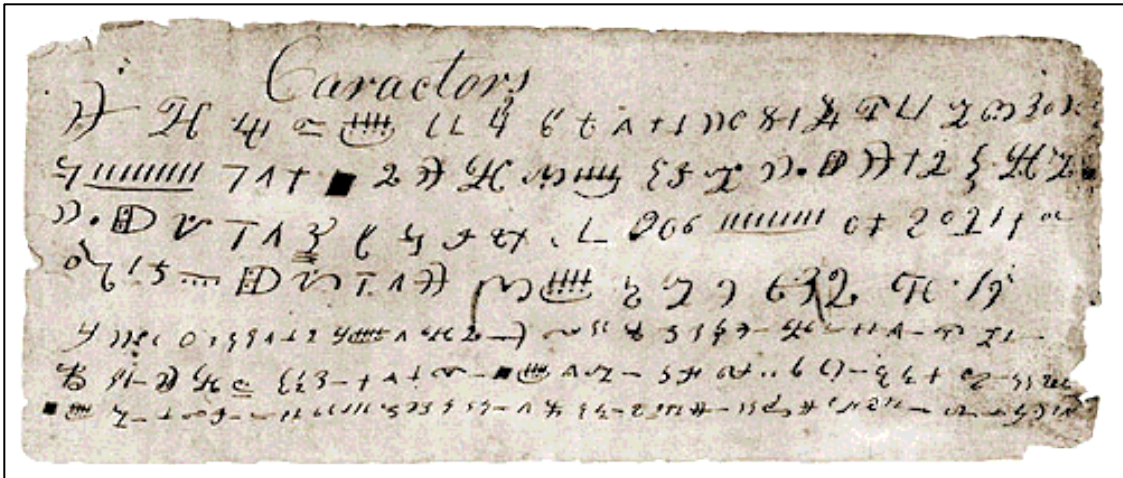
The reader might wonder, where the original copy of the Anthon Transcript might be? Stanley Kimball responds, Martin Harris probably kept his copy for many years, but there is nothing known about what he finally did with it. In 1884 a committee of the RLDS Church conversed with David Whitmer and were shown a transcript of which he wrote, "I have in my possession the original paper containing some of the characters transcribed from one of the golden plates, which paper Martin Harris took to Professor Anthon of New York." Unfortunately we lack any further information regarding how, when, or why David Whitmer acquired this document. Though inconclusive, it is of interest to note that Martin Harris neither confirmed nor denied David Whitmer's claim. The RLDS transcript was given to the Church in 1903 by the heirs of David Whitmer, fifteen years after his death in 1888.

One interesting, and possibly very meaningful, detail about the RLDS transcript is the word "Charactors" written across the top. Four students of early Church history, R.D. Webb, Ariel Crowley, Dean Jessee of the LDS Church Historian's Office, and the anti-Mormon writer I. Woodbridge Riley, think that this word is in the hand of Joseph Smith. If so, the authenticity of the RLDS transcript would be strengthened greatly. (Stanley B. Kimball, "The Anthon Transcript: People, Primary Sources, and Problems," p. 347-349, Reprinted by F.A.R.M.S. from *BYU Studies*, Vol. 10 (1970). [See the commentary on Moroni 10:27-29]

2 Nephi 27:15 **Take These Words . . . and Deliver Them to Another:**

Part of Nephi's prophecy about showing the words of the Book of Mormon to another included the Lord's command, "Take these words . . . and deliver them to another, that he may show them unto the learned" (2 Nephi 27:15). According to McConkie and Millet, here is the prophetic word which attests that Martin Harris's trip to New York was based upon more than his own curiosity or desire for academic substantiation for the Book of Mormon translation. Joseph Smith was commanded of the Lord to send another, Martin Harris, to New York.

(Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 1, p. 322.)



Anthon Transcript

olivercowdery.com

2 Nephi 27:15 **Take these words which are not sealed and deliver them to another, that he may show them unto the learned (illustration):** This document, which may be the original paper carried by Martin Harris to show Charles Anthon in New York City, presents some of the Book of Mormon characters. Courtesy Library Archives, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, The Auditorium, Independence, Missouri]

2 Nephi 27:15 **Take These Words . . . and Deliver Them to Another:**

In 2 Nephi 27:9-15 we find the following prophecy:

But behold, it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall say unto him to whom he shall deliver the book: Take these words which are not sealed and deliver them to another, that he may show them unto the learned, saying: Read this, I pray thee.

According to Wade Brown, verbal history testifies that Joseph gave the "words" from the plates he was translating to Martin Harris in the form of a transcript, and Martin Harris in turn presented this document to Professor Anthon. But is there any tangible proof?

There is a document containing Nephite script that passed into the custody of David Whitmer, one of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon. It is believed by many that this document is the original Harris-Anthon Transcript. From Whitmer's estate it eventually passed to the leadership of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, now titled the Community of Christ. That church has protected and cared for the document for well over 100 years. Wade Brown has spent 30 years studying this document. The following is a summary of his findings:

The strange script on the yellowing piece of paper has always been fascinating. Perhaps part of its appeal is the mystery surrounding its authenticity. It is really the Harris-Anthon Transcript? Who was the Nephite author(s) who composed it? What does it say? If Joseph copied it, is it copied accurately? Is it merely a passage from an internal part of the text or is it taken from a variety of separate plates?

Brown goes on to detail the almost 30 years of frustrated research in gaining an answer to the above questions until he one day made a chance observation. He was looking at an enlarged copy but then turned to a normal sized copy with a magnifying glass and noticed a repetition at the bottom of the page. After many years he finally saw that the last line of the document reflected part of what appeared to be a perfect inverted parallel. One point of the last line was the center of the inverted parallel but the last little part of the parallel had been cut off. When this center point was recognized then each repeated character on the last three lines of small print on the manuscript fell into place as expected to form about two-thirds of an inverted parallel (the last part being cut off).

In the days which followed, Brown was also able to structure the first four lines of large print into an additional inverted parallel. This one started at the beginning of the writing at the top of the document and continued completely to the end of the large print.

Brown explains that when he was young he thought that Joseph Smith just became tired of copying the strange characters of the Anthon Manuscript and his handwriting became weaker and smaller. This proved a naive opinion. After finding the two separate inverted parallel forms, he realized that the characters do not gradually become smaller, they are apparently sized for a purpose. The top 4 lines were apparently large because they were the overall introduction to a book--the 3 small bottom lines being a sub-introduction.

Using this newfound information, Brown found that Nephi used the same technique at the beginning to his book of 1st Nephi. The overall introduction at the very top of Nephi's first book provides a general statement explaining the colony of Lehi. The second introduction is a

more personal introduction comprising 1 Nephi 1:1 through 1:3. In the first edition of the Book of Mormon, Nephi's first introduction was at the top of the printed page in large letters, and his secondary introduction was in smaller letters and was included within the text of the first chapter. This confirmed what Brown had suspected and led him to do further analysis. As a result of this analysis, Brown writes that if his theory is correct, the following facts are probably true:

1. The characters on the proposed Anthon Transcript are accurately copied from the Nephite plates. Otherwise, the established language patterns would not have been retained. These language patterns negate the critics' claim that the script on the transcript was the idle creation of Joseph Smith.
2. The script reads from right to left as suggested by Joseph Smith, rather than from left to right as in English and other modern languages.
3. The text wraps--each line is a continuation of previous thought, not an independent phrase.
4. Thus the transcript reflects identifiable Hebrew form in a transitory (shorthand) script. It truly was a form of shorthand which required less writing space than Hebrew.
5. In comparing the transitory script with the parallel patterns of the present Book of Mormon, no similarities to any portion of the text has been found.
6. Yet the enlarged text appears to be from the heading of a book.
7. So perhaps the text reflects the first page of the manuscript (Book of Lehi) which was lost by Martin Harris--the first page from the golden plates of the Book of Mormon.
8. Thus the Document held by the Community of Christ can be plausibly put forth as an authentic representation of characters which are inscribed on the golden plates.
9. While it might be possible to decipher the symbols through study, something that to the present time has been an exercise in frustration, it is also possible that decipherment will remain until the Lord directs his chosen servants to do so.

(C. Wade Brown, *The First Page of the Golden Plates*, p. 55-92.)

Characters

1 110 81 2 2 U 2 2 3 2
 4 6 6 A 3
 III 6 L 4
 H 1 2 { 4 2 } H 4 6 5
 III 8 5 2 D 8
 T ■ 2 H 4 C 10 7
 7 A 8
 0 6 7 III 9
 0 2 1 10
 0 7 2 10
 0 6 III 9
 A 3 C 4 5 6 7 L 2 8
 V T 7
 1 9 D 6
 7 6 9 2 7 6 5
 III 8 2 4
 A H 10 3
 1 5 III D V T 2
 0 6 1

7 7 4 - 1
 5 6 5 + 1 A - 2
 5 5 6 6 4 111 0 1 3 3 1 1 1 5 0 1 1 4 1 2 → 1 11 4 3 7 7 - 3
 9 4 + 0 2 - 4
 5 7 1 0 1 1 6 6 - 5
 III A 7 - 8
 7 A + 10 - 7
 2 4 6 5 6 6 3 - 8
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 - 8
 1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 - 10
 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 - 10
 1 4 5 6 - 9
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 - 8
 1 2 3 4 - 7
 III 2 - 6

2 Nephi 27:9 **2 Nephi 27:15 Take these words . . . and deliver them to another [Illustration]:** The Text of the Anthon Manuscript. Two inverted parallel structures appear on the document when the text is formatted to illustrate separate phrases. The script reads from right to left. (C. Wade Brown, *The First Page of the Golden Plates*, p. 80-81.)

2 Nephi 27:15 Take These Words Which Are Not Sealed and Deliver Them to Another, That He May Show Them unto the Learned:

According to Stanley Kimball and Cleon Skousen, Professor Charles Anthon is the brilliant and scholarly gentleman who turned out to be the "one that is learned," spoken of in Isaiah 29:11 and in 2 Nephi 27:15-18. It was to this learned professor of Columbia that Martin Harris took the characters which had been copied from the plates of the Book of Mormon.

Charles Anthon was professor of classical studies at Columbia College (later Columbia University) for forty-seven years--1820-1867. In earlier years he attended Columbia as a student and is described as probably the most brilliant scholar ever to attend Columbia College.

The *Dictionary of American Biography* describes Professor Anthon as a prolific writer. During a period of thirty years he produced at least one volume annually. "Each of his text books passed through several editions, and for thirty years his influence upon the study of the classics in the United States was probably greater than that of any other man." (Vol. 1, p. 314) Edgar Allen Poe wrote of Anthon: "If not absolutely the best, he is at least generally considered the best classicist in America . . ." (*The Literati*, New York, 1859, p. 45-47). *Harper's Weekly*, Aug. 17, 1867, said Professor Anthon was "more widely known in Europe than any other American commentator on classical authors."



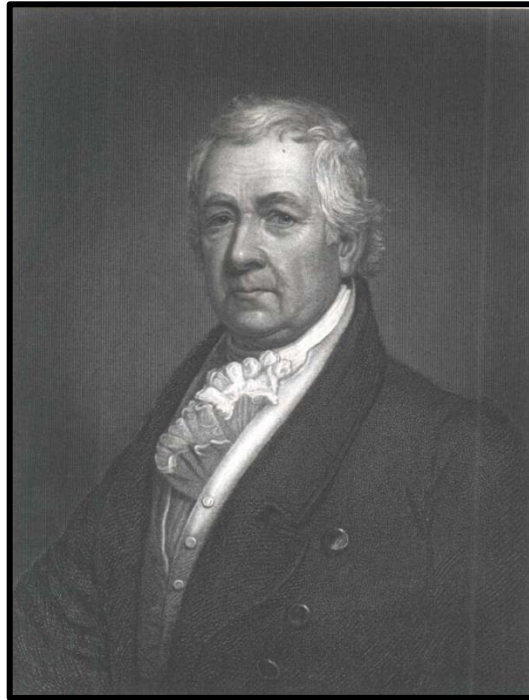
Charles Anthon lds.org

Charles Anthon was a bachelor and lived in a wing of Columbia College. It is believed that it was there, in his study, that Martin Harris interviewed him.

Kimball's research also suggests that the "Dr. Mitchell" referred to in the Joseph Smith History was Samuel L. Mitchill, MD. "His early studies were in the classics. After receiving his medical and scientific training in New York and Edinburgh, he was appointed to the chair of natural history, chemistry, and agriculture at Columbia College in 1792."

(Stanley B. Kimball, "The Anthon Transcript," *BYU Studies*, Spring, 1970, p. 331.) [W. Cleon Skousen, *Treasures from the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 2, p. 1367.]

Note* The following comes from a Wikipedia article on Samuel Latham Mitchill:



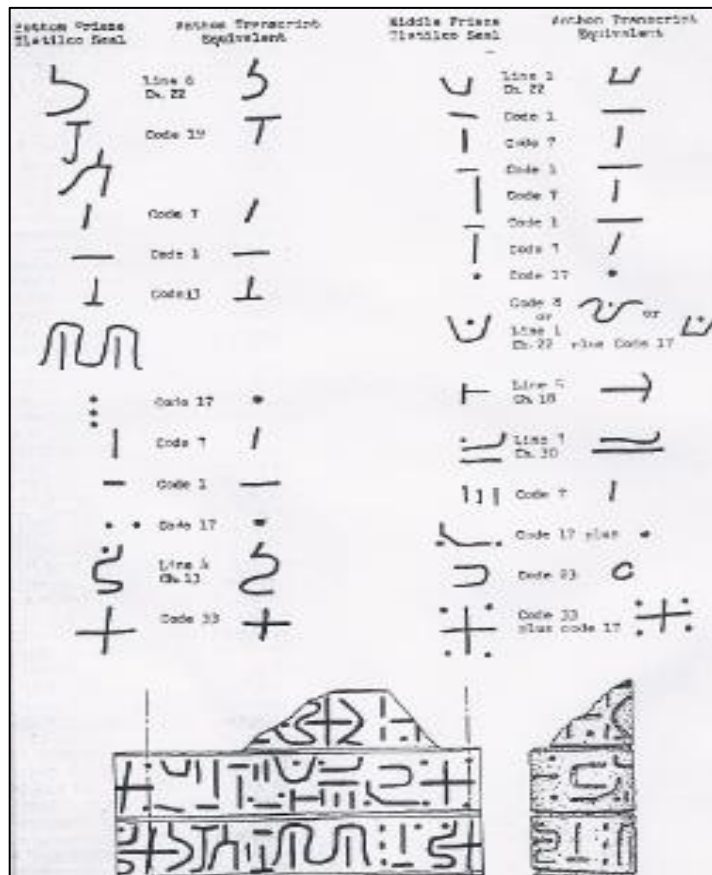
Mitchill was a man of "irrepressible energies . . . polyglot enthusiasms . . . [and] distinguished eccentricities" who was not "a man afraid to speak out loud about the loves of plants and animals; indeed, he was not a man afraid to speak out loud on most any topic. In the early nineteenth century, Mitchill was New York's "most publicly universal gentleman...a man known variously as the 'living encyclopedia,' as a 'stalking library,' and (to his admired Jefferson) as the 'Congressional Dictionary.'" "Once described as a 'chaos of knowledge,' Mitchill was generally more admired for his encyclopedic breadth of understanding than for much originality of thought." As a personality he was affable but also egotistical and pedantic. Mitchill enjoyed popularizing scientific knowledge and promoting practical applications of scientific inquiry.

2 Nephi 27:15 Take These Words Which Are Not Sealed and Deliver Them to Another, That He May Show Them unto the Learned:

According to Carl Jones, the first archaeological evidence of a possible New World script which might be comparable to that of the Anthon Transcript was found on a cylindrical stamp reported in *La Venta, Tabasco: A Study of Olmec Ceramics and Art* (Drucker, 1952).

Another archaeological example of Anthon Transcript-like characters from the New World is the roller stamp found at Tlatilco in the Valley of Mexico, now in the Milwaukee Public Museum, which was reported by David H. Kelley in the journal *American Antiquity* (Kelley, 1966). In his brief article Dr. Kelley went so far as to call this an example of a "hitherto unknown writing system."

(Carl H. Jones, "The 'Anthon Transcript' and Two Mesoamerican Cylinder Seals," *Newsletter and Proceedings of the S.E.H.A.*, Number 122, p. 6-7.)



2 Nephi 27:15 Take these words which are not sealed and deliver them to another, that he may show them unto the learned (illustration): Markings on the inscribed roller stamp ("cylinder seal") found at Tlatilco in the Valley of Mexico (bottom) and Anthon Transcript equivalents. (Carl H. Jones, "The 'Anthon Transcript' and Two Mesoamerican Cylinder Seals," *Newsletter and Proceedings of the S.E.H.A.*, Number 122, p. 5.)

2 Nephi 27:17 **I Cannot Bring the Book, For It Is Sealed**

(See KnowWhy #541 Why Was the Heavenly Book Sealed with Seven Seals?

www.bookofmormoncentral.org)

2 Nephi 27:19 **I Am Not Learned:**

Donl Peterson comments that while the Lord chose Joseph Smith to preside over this last dispensation of the gospel, Joseph had not been tutored in the schools of his day except to learn a few basic skills. Neither had he been schooled in the religious philosophies of his day. Joseph was pliable clay, ready and willing to be molded by the Master Craftsman. Isaiah reported that the Lord would give the ancient western scripture "to him that is not learned." Joseph, whom Isaiah saw in vision, would acknowledge:

I am not learned. Then shall the Lord God say unto him: The learned shall not read them for they have rejected them, and I am able to do mine own work; wherefore thou shalt read the words which I shall give unto thee. . . . For behold, I am God; and I am a God of miracles and I will show unto the world that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever; and I work not among the children of men save it be according to their faith. (2 Nephi 27:19-20, 23)

Joseph exercised faith early in his life; consequently, he was introduced to the ultimate schooling that is available to man--God's way. Joseph once said: "The best way to obtain truth and wisdom is not to ask it from books, but to go to God in prayer, and obtain divine teaching." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, compl. Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], p. 191.)

It is impossible to determine how many heavenly messengers counseled the Prophet Joseph Smith. It is equally difficult to ascertain how often those who have been identified visited him. Moroni appeared over a score of times--probably many more--and he is but one of several dozen angelic beings who further prepared Joseph Smith for his great calling.

Even though the following canon is probably far from complete, it is the most complete list of heavenly personages who appeared to Joseph Smith or who were seen by him in vision that Donl Peterson was able to compile. Realize, again, that some of these great beings appeared several times to the Prophet Joseph.

Personages Who Appeared to Joseph

Personage

1. God the Father
2. Jesus Christ
3. Moroni
4. Elijah
5. John the Baptist
- 6-8. Peter, James, John
9. Adam (Michael)

10. Noah (Gabriel)
11. Raphael
12. Moses
13. Elias
14. Abraham
15. Isaac
16. Jacob
17. Enoch
- 18-27. The Twelve Jewish Apostles
(Peter, James, and John are already
counted above.)

- 28-39. The Twelve Nephite
Apostles, including the Three
Nephites
40. Nephi
41. Seth
42. Methuselah
43. Enos
44. Mahalaleel
45. Jared (Bible)
46. Lamech
47. Abel
48. Cainan
49. Zelph the Lamanite
50. Alvin Smith, Joseph's deceased
brother
51. Mormon

References

- JS--H 1:17; *History of the Church* 1:5; D&C 76:20
JS--H 1:17; *HC* 1:5-6; D&C 76:20-24; D&C 110:2-10
JS--H 1;30-49; *Journal of Discourses*, 17:374
D&C 110:13-16; *JD* 23:48
D&C 13; *HC* 1:39-40
D&C 128:20; *HC* 1:40-42; *JD* 18:326
HC 3:388; D&C 128:21; HC 2:380; *JD* 18:326, 21:94;
23:48; D&C 107:53-57; *JD* 9:41
D&C 128:21; *JD* 21:94, 23:48
D&C 128:21
D&C 110:11; *JD* 23:48; 21:65
D&C 110:12; *JD* 23:48
JD 21:94, 23:48
JD 21:94
JD 21:65, 94; HC 3:388; D&C 107:53-57
JD 21:94
JD 21:94
JD 21:161
JD 21:94; HC 3:388; D&C 107:53-57
JD 18:325; *HC* 3:388; D&C 107:53-57
JD 18:325; *HC* 3:388; D&C 107:53-57
JD 18:325; *HC* 3:388; D&C 107:53-57
HC 3:388; D&C 107:53-57
JD 18:325
JD 18:325; HC 3:388
HC 3:388; D&C 107:53-57
Times and Seasons 6:788
HC 2:380
JD 17:374

(H. Donl Peterson, *Moroni: Ancient Prophet Modern Messenger*, p. 139-141.)

2 Nephi 27:26 **Wherefore, I Shall Proceed to Do a Marvelous Work and a Wonder**

(See KnoWhy #506 Why Is the Timing of the Book of Mormon's Translation So "Marvelous"? www.bookofmormoncentral.org)

2 Nephi 27:27 **Wo unto Them That Seek Deep to Hide Their Counsels from the Lord:**

According to John Tvedtnes, some passages of the Book of Mormon can be better understood in Hebrew than in English because the Hebrew reflects word-play or a range of meaning which gives more sense to the passage. . . . Nephi wrote of the wicked who "seek deep to hide their counsel(s) from the Lord" (2 Nephi 27:27; 28:9). If Hebrew was indeed the language of the Book of Mormon, the Hebrew word here translated as "counsel" may have been *sod*, which can also mean "secret."

(John A. Tvedtnes, "I Have a Question," in *The Ensign*, October 1986, p. 64.)

2 Nephi 27:32 **And They That Make a Man an Offender for a Word:**

In discussing examples of passages from Isaiah which appear to be copied from the King James Bible into the Book of Mormon, scholars have found variations in the text. Jeff Lindsay notes that this issue of Isaiah variants in the Book of Mormon is actually fairly complex and interesting. Lindsay includes a quote from Franklin Harris discussing one example:

To Isaiah 29:21 the Book of Mormon in 2 Nephi 27:32 adds the phrase "and they" to the beginning of the verse. The Septuagint and Syriac both read the same as the Book of Mormon. (Franklin S. Harris, Jr., *The Book of Mormon: Messages and Evidences*, p. 50-52.)

[Quoted by Jeff Lindsay, "Did Joseph Smith Plagiarize from the King James Bible?," Book of Mormon Commentary, www.jefflindsay.com]

Chapter 28

2 Nephi 28 (The Use of Isaiah):

According to Robert Cloward, chapter 28 of 2 Nephi weaves together allusions to and phraseology from many chapters in Isaiah.

1. Some are taken from Isaiah 2-14.
 - a. the theme of pride in 2 Nephi 28:9, 12-15
(compare Isaiah 2:11-17)
 - b. the theme of the proud harming the poor in 2 Nephi 28:13
(compare Isaiah 3:15)
 - c. the theme of the unwillingness to repent in 2 Nephi 28:17
(compare Nephi's version of Isaiah 2:9--1 Nephi 12:9)
 - d. the fall of the "abominable" in 2 Nephi 18-23
(compare Isaiah 14:19)
 - e. being brought "down to hell" in 2 Nephi 28:21
(compare Isaiah 14:15)
 - f. the eight "wo" statements in 2 Nephi 28:16-32
(compare the five woes of Isaiah 5:8-23)
2. "eat and drink; for tomorrow we shall die" in 2 Nephi 28:7-8
(compare Isaiah 22:13)
3. "I am the Lord's in 2 Nephi 28:3
(compare Isaiah 44:5)
4. "precept upon precept; line upon line" in 2 Nephi 28:30
(compare Isaiah 28:10,13)

Thus we can see that Nephi's "own prophecy" displays his total mastery of Isaiah's concepts and doctrines. No one with cursory knowledge could have written this. Because he knows them intimately, Nephi can integrate Isaiah's complex teachings into his likening in such a way that they become "plain."

(Robert A. Cloward, "Isaiah 29 and the Book of Mormon," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, p. 213-214.)

2 Nephi 28:3 **The Churches Which Are Built Up, and Not unto the Lord . . . Shall Say:**

According to Miriam Horwinski, embedded in Nephi's prophecy in 2 Nephi 28 are many phrases that describe the conduct of those who follow the devil. These sins, Nephi states, will pervade much of society in the latter days. Today they can be found well disguised as the

philosophies and tendencies listed in the chart below.

(Miriam Horwinski, teaching assistant of John W. Welch, Book of Mormon 121H, Brigham Young University, fall 1997.)

The Ways of the Devil
2 Nephi 28:3-30

<u>Tactic</u>	<u>Quotation</u>	<u>Verse</u>
Misappropriation	“built up, and not unto the Lord”	3
Exclusivism	“I am the Lord’s”	3
Disputation	“contend one with another”	4
Sophism	“teach with their learning”	4
Cynicism	“deny the Holy Ghost, which giveth utterance”	4
Secularism	“deny the power of God”	5
Historicism	“the Redeemer hath done his work”	5
Empowerment	“he hath given his power unto men”	5
Skepticism	“believe it not”	6
Naturalism	“he is not a God of miracles”	6
Hedonism	“eat, drink, and be merry”	7
Fatalism	“tomorrow we die”	7
Cavalierism	“it shall be well with us”	7
Appearances	“nevertheless, fear God”	8
Popularism	“many . . . shall say”	8
Rationalizing	“justify in committing a little sin”	8
Criticism	“take the advantage of one because of his words”	8
Entrapment	“dig a pit for thy neighbor”	8
Legalism	“no harm in this”	8
Permissivism	“do all these things”	8
Leniency	“God will beat us with a few stripes”	8
Fadism	“many . . . shall teach after this manner”	9
Sensationalism	“false”	9
Egotism	“vain”	9
Imprudence	“foolish”	9
Arrogance	“puffed up in their hearts”	9
Self-Deception	“hide their counsels from the Lord”	9
Persecutionism	“blood of the saints shall cry”	10
Corruptionism	“they have become corrupted”	11
Opressionism	“rob the poor”	13
Ostentationism	“because of their fine sanctuaries”	13
Narcissism	“their fine clothing”	13

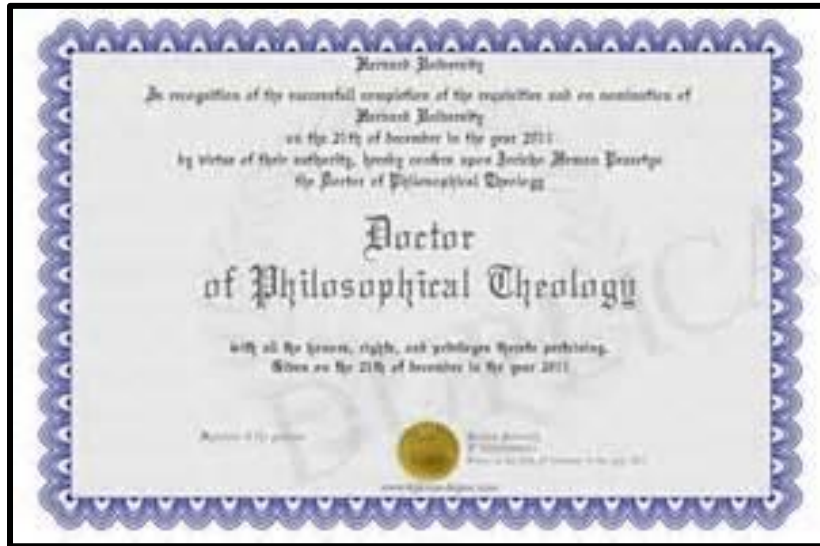
Supremism	“persecute the meek and the poor in heart”	13
Elitism	“stiff necks and high heads”	13
Immorality	“abominations and whoredoms”	14
Distortionism	“pervert the right way of the Lord”	15
Trivialism	“turn aside the just for a thing of naught”	16
Meanness	“revile against that which is good”	16
Dismissivism	“say that it is of no worth”	16
Tantrumism	“rage in the hearts of the children”	20
Emotionalism	“anger against that which is good”	20
Mollifying Pacifism	“others will he pacify”	21
Materialism	“into carnal security”	21
Toadyism	“others he flattereth”	22
Relativism	“there is no hell”	22
Complacency	“wo be unto him that is at ease in Zion”	24
Secularism	“we need no more of the word of God”	29
Faithless Humanism	“putteth his trust in man”	30

[John W. Welch and J. Gregory Welch, Charting the Book of Mormon: Visual Aids for Personal Study and Teaching, F.A.R.M.S., commentary for Chart 79]



ephesians511blog.blogspot.com

2 Nephi 28:4 They Shall Teach With Their Learning:



diploma-degree.com



onmilwiki.com



ar15.com



diploma-degree.com

2 Nephi 28:4-5. And They Deny the Power of God:

According to Joseph Smith:

“Respecting the Melchizedek Priesthood, the sectarians never professed to have it; consequently, they never could save any one, and would all be damned together. There was an Episcopal priest who said he had the priesthood of Aaron, but had not the priesthood of Melchizedek: and I bear testimony that I never have found the man who

claimed the Priesthood of Melchizedek. The power of the Melchizedek Priesthood is to have the power of 'endless lives'; for the everlasting covenant cannot be broken." (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 322)

"Many objections are urged against the Latter-day Saints for not admitting the validity of sectarian baptism, and for withholding fellowship from sectarian churches. Yet to do otherwise would be like putting new wine into old bottles, and putting old wine into new bottles. What! new revelations in the old churches? New revelations would knock out the bottom of their bottomless pit. New wine into old bottles! The bottles burst and the wine runs out! What! Sadducees in the new church! Old wine in new leathern bottles will leak through the pores and escape. So the Sadducee saints mock at authority, kick out of the traces, and run to the mountains of perdition, leaving the long echo of their braying behind them." (p. 192)

[Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 322, 192]

2 Nephi 28:8 **Eat, Drink, and Be Merry:**



inglespodcast.com

2 Nephi 28:13 **They Rob the Poor Because of Their Fine Sanctuaries:**

Marble House

Marble House was built between 1888 and 1892 in Newport, Rhode Island for Mr. and Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt. Mr. Vanderbilt was the grandson of Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt, who established the family's fortune in steamships and the New York Central Railroad.

Marble House was a summer house, or "cottage", as Newporters called them in remembrance of the modest houses of the early 19th century. But Marble House was much more; it was a social and architectural landmark that set the pace for Newport's subsequent transformation from a quiet summer colony of wooden houses to the legendary resort of opulent stone palaces.

The house was designed by the architect Richard Morris Hunt, and inspired by the Palace of Versailles, France. The court of Versailles was the center of political power in France from 1682, when Louis XIV moved from Paris, until the royal family was forced to return to the capital in October 1789 after the beginning of the French Revolution. Versailles is therefore famous not only as a building, but as a symbol of the system of absolute monarchy of the Ancien Régime.

Marble House received its name from the over 500,000 cubic feet of marble contained within it.

Upon its completion in 1892, Mr. Vanderbilt gave the house to his wife as a 39th birthday present. Alva Vanderbilt was a leading hostess in Newport society, and envisioned Marble House as her "temple to the arts" in America.

Ironically, the Vanderbilts divorced just three years later in 1895. Upon her remarriage in 1896 to Oliver Belmont, Alva relocated down the street to Belmont's mansion. In the years to come Mr. Belmont died, and Alva shuttered the Marble House permanently in 1919, when she relocated to France to be closer to her daughter. There she divided her time between a Paris townhouse, a villa on the Riviera, and the Château d'Augerville, which she restored.

www.newportmansions.org and wikipedia.org



Inside just one of the rooms of the Marble House –gilded in gold Newport, Rhode Island
a-l-ancient.regime.tumblr.com

2 Nephi 28:14 **Abominations and Whoredoms:**

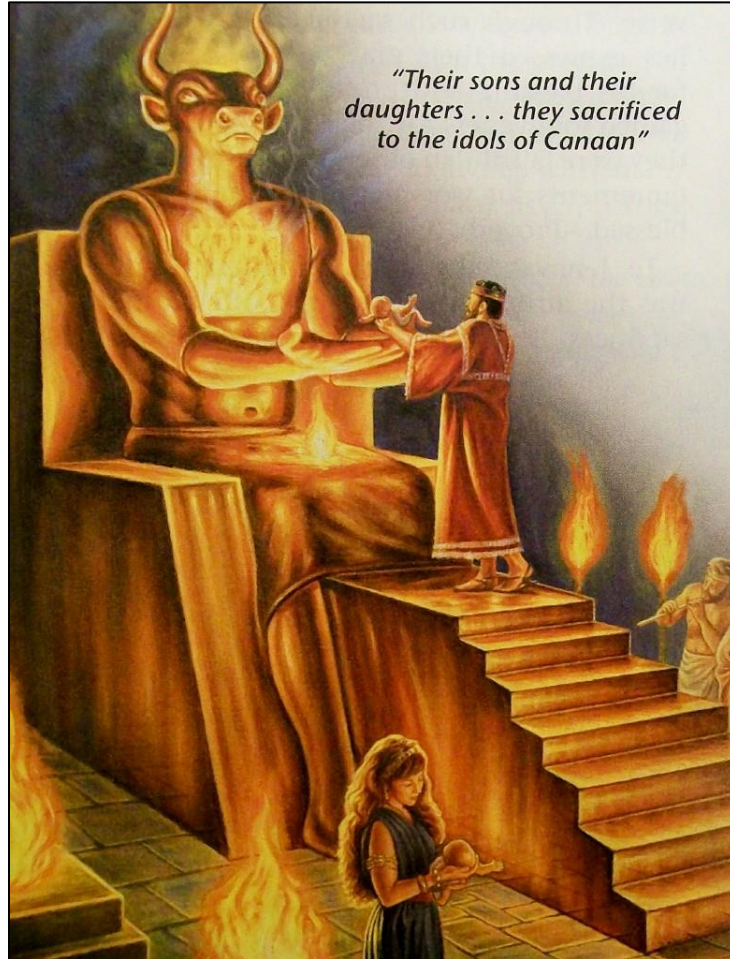
It is interesting that in all the Bible, the only prophet that used the terms “abominations” and “whoredoms” in the same verse was Ezekiel, who spoke prophetically about the downfall and destruction of Jerusalem at the time that Nephi and his family departed. While “whoredoms” are what they are, Ezekiel connected them with the “abominations.” And Ezekiel connects “abominations” with the sacrificing of babies and infants to their false gods:

Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thy filthiness was poured out, and thy nakedness discovered through thy whoredoms with thy lovers, and with all the idols of thy **abominations**, and by the blood of thy children, which thou didst give unto them (Ezekiel 16:36)

Perhaps many of these babies were the result of “whoredoms.”

Jeremiah, another prophet at the time that Jerusalem was destroyed, had this to say:

And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this **abomination**, to cause Judah to sin. (Jeremiah 32:35)



Moloch child sacrifice

endtimeshofar.blogspot.com

And perhaps we have a parallel situation in our own times— it is called “promiscuity” and “abortion.” While these have always been part of societies, it is in our own times that they are supported both “morally” and financially by our government. The following are some facts about Abortion.

ABORTION FACTS

Many people fail to appreciate the sheer magnitude of bloodshed, suffering, and death that legalized abortion has introduced into the human experience – both in the United States and worldwide. Far more human lives have been violently ended by this scourge than by any other war or genocide in all of history.

Unaware of just how early and rapidly prenatal human development occurs, many Americans believe that the law should not protect the lives of embryonic and fetal human beings in the first 3 months of pregnancy. However, a strong majority of Americans believe that abortion from the fourth month of pregnancy and on is an evil of such immensity that it is appropriate to ban it. But even the numbers of these second- and third-trimester abortions are alarmingly large.

The following facts on abortion are provided by the strongly pro-abortion Guttmacher Institute. Given the source of this information, it's impossible for anyone to argue that these statistics are being stated misleadingly by biased pro-life advocates.

Worldwide

Number of abortions per year: approximately 42 million

Number of abortions per day: approximately 115,000

© Copyright 1996-2008, The Guttmacher Institute. (<http://www.agi-usa.org>)

United States

Number of abortions per year: 1.21 million (2005)

Number of abortions per day: approximately 3,315

89% of all abortions in the United States are performed in the first trimester of pregnancy

11% of all abortions in the United States are performed in the second and third trimesters of pregnancy

Who's having abortions (age)?

50% of women obtaining abortions in the U.S. are younger than 25: women aged 20-24 obtain 33% of all abortions; teenagers obtain 17%; and girls under 15 account for 1.2%.

Who's having abortions (race)?

While white women obtain 60% of all abortions, their abortion rate is well below that of minority women. Black women are more than 3 times as likely as white women to have an abortion, and Hispanic women are roughly 2 times as likely.

Who's having abortions (marital status)?

66% of all abortions are performed on never-married women; married women account for 18% of all abortions; and divorced women obtain 9.4%.

Who's having abortions (religion)?

Women identifying themselves as Protestants obtain 43% of all abortions in the U.S.; Catholic women account for 27%; Jewish women account for 1.3%; and women with no religious affiliation obtain 24% of all abortions. 18% of all abortions are performed on women who identify themselves as born-again or Evangelical.

Who's having abortions (income)?

Women with family incomes less than \$15,000 obtain 29% of all abortions; women with family incomes between \$15,000 and \$29,999 obtain 20%; women with family incomes between \$30,000 and \$59,999 obtain 38%; and women with family incomes over \$60,000 obtain 14%.

Why women have abortions

1% of all abortions occur because of rape or incest; 6% of abortions occur because of potential health problems with either the mother or the child; and 93% of all abortions occur for social reasons (that is, the child is unwanted or inconvenient).

www.abortionno.org/abortion-facts



20 Week Abortion

reformationanglicanism.blogspot.com

"Abortion Costs US Over \$16 Trillion in Federal Revenue"

7/31/2014

Mark Olson, a former liberal activist, has published research demonstrating the devastating economic impact abortion-on-demand has had on the American economy. Olson's research finds that more than \$16 trillion in federal revenue, roughly the size of our national debt, has been lost due to abortion.

charismanews.com

(Alan Miner, Personal Notes)

2 Nephi 28:15 **[All Those] Who Pervert the Right Way of the Lord:**

Homosexuality Statistics

Below are some homosexuality statistics which reveal the nature of homosexuality:

Dr. Neil Whitehead and Briar Whitehead state regarding various cultures: "If homosexuality were significantly influenced by genes, it would appear in every culture, but in twenty-nine of seventy-nine cultures surveyed by Ford and Beach in 1952, homosexuality was rare or absent." [1]

Concerning Homosexuality and promiscuity, in 2004 the Baptist Press reported the following:

"A new study by a group of University of Chicago researchers reveals a high level of promiscuity and unhealthy behavior among that city's homosexual male population. According to the researchers, 42.9 percent of homosexual men in Chicago's Shoreland area have had more than 60 sexual partners, while an additional 18.4 percent have had between 31 and 60 partners...As a result, 55.1 percent of homosexual males in Shoreland -- known as Chicago's "gay center" -- have at least one sexually transmitted disease, researchers said." [6][7]

In September of 2006, the Agape Press reported the following:

"A survey by The Advocate, a homosexual magazine, revealed that promiscuity is a reality among homosexuals. The poll found that 20 percent of homosexuals said they had had 51-300 different sex partners in their lifetime, with an additional 8 percent having had more than 300.

Unprotected homosexual sex is also a concern among health professionals. A survey in Ireland by the Gay Men's Health Project found that almost half of homosexuals said they were having unprotected sex....

The fact that many homosexuals appear to live their lives in sexual overdrive does not seem to concern leaders in the movement. In an editorial from the same issue (August 15) in which the survey results were published, The Advocate said: "[Homosexuals] have been proud leaders in the sexual revolution that started in the 1960s, and we have rejected attempts by conservatives to demonize that part of who we are." [8]

conservapedia.com

(Alan Miner, Personal Notes)

2 Nephi 28:16 **Them That . . . Revile Against That Which is Good:**



atheistempire.com



gaystarnews.com

2 Nephi 28:6 He Is Not a God of Miracles:

Moroni prophesied of the day when the Book of Mormon would come forth. He said it would be a day when it shall be said that miracles are done away (Mormon 8:26). He explains the falseness of this doctrine later when he writes:

‘And now, O all ye that have imagined up unto yourselves a god who can do no miracles, I would ask of you, have all these things passed, of which I have spoken? Has the end come yet? Behold I say unto you, Nay; and God has not ceased to be a God of miracles.

Behold, are not the things that God hath wrought marvelous in our eyes? Yea, and who can comprehend the marvelous works of God?

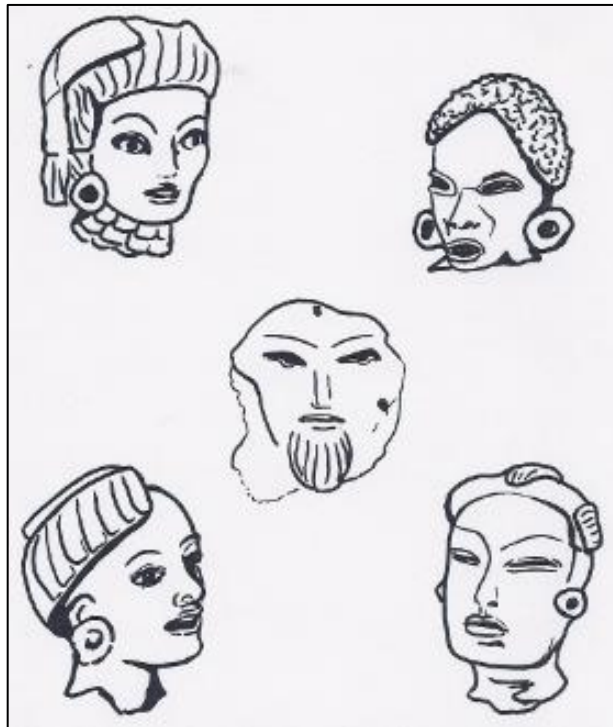
Who shall say that it was not a miracle that by his word the heaven and the earth should be; and by the power of his word man was created of the dust of the earth; and by the power of his word have miracles been wrought?

And who shall say that Jesus Christ did not do many mighty miracles? And there were many mighty miracles wrought by the hands of the apostles.

And if there were miracles wrought then, why has God ceased to be a God of miracles and yet be an unchangeable Being? And behold, I say unto you he changeth not; if so he would cease to be God; and he ceaseth not to be God, and is a God of miracles.

And the reason why he ceaseth to do miracles among the children of men is because that they dwindle in unbelief, and depart from the right way, and know not the God in whom they should trust.' (Mormon 9:15-20)

2 Nephi 28:10 And the Blood of the Saints Shall Cry from the Ground:



2 Nephi 28:10 **And the blood of the saints shall cry from the ground (Illustration):** Various cultures of Mesoamerica portrayed in terracotta. Top left, Caucasian female. Guerrero, Pacific Coast; Top right, Negro, Plateau of Mexico, Tlapacoyan; center, Semitic-type bearded man, Tabasco; bottom left, Caucasian girl, Veracruz; Bottom right, Oriental head, Plateau of Mexico, Tlapacoyan (all in private collections). Drawing after photograph from *The Art of Terracotta Pottery in Pre-Columbian Central and South America*, by Alexander von Wuthenau (New York: Crown Publishers Inc.) [Diane E. Wirth, [A Challenge to the Critics](#), p. 19]

According to Diane Wirth, one of the most noted workers in the field of American Indian genetics, Dr. G. A. Matson, has studied blood grouping and stated, "The American Indians are not completely Mongoloid." Professor Earnest Hooten of Harvard not only agreed with Dr. Matson, but thought he saw Near Easterners as a racial component. It is interesting to note that blood types of the American Indian do not correspond to those of east Asian peoples where most

scholars theorize the American Indians have their roots. In fact, a more plausible theory is that their ancestors came, by sea, from non-Mongoloid parts of the Old World. Blood types are genetically inherited and passed from father to son, from one generation to the next. Among Asians, blood types A and B are most common; among American Indians, blood type O predominates. Except for the Eskimos, and some Athabaskan groups such as the Apache and the Navajo, blood group B is virtually nonexistent among American Indians throughout North, Middle, and South America.

Artifacts found in the area of the Bering Strait suggest the influence of a rather small number of Asians -- far below any number that would have been needed to produce the large populace which existed. What explanation do we have for other racial types in the Americas such as the Negro, if we follow current theories and refuse to consider transoceanic voyages?

(Diane E. Wirth, *A Challenge to the Critics*, p. 25.) [See the commentary on Omni 1:15]

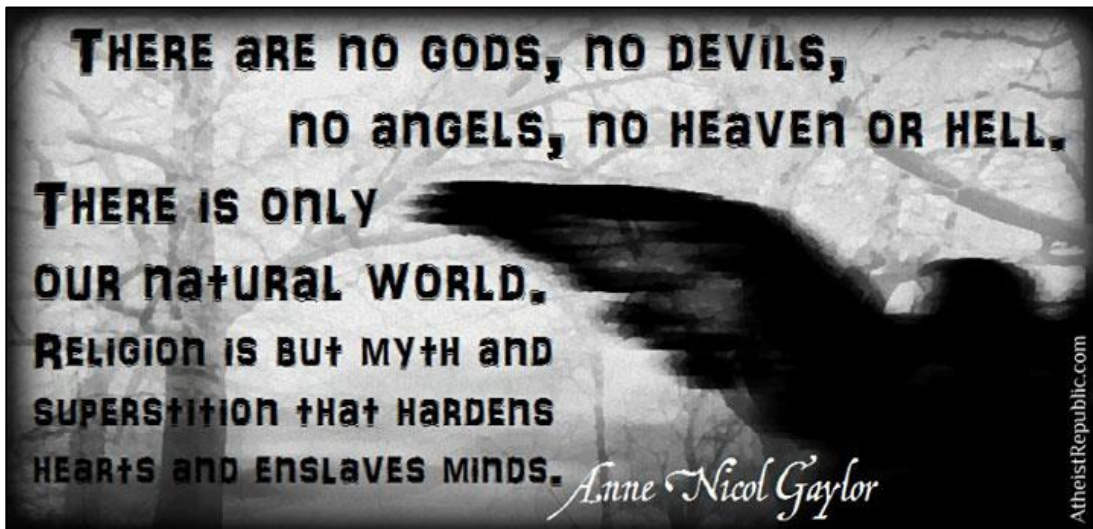
2 Nephi 28:21 **Zion Prospereth, All is Well:**



Zion Prospereth All is Well

hearsaysocial.com

2 Nephi 28:22 There is No Hell . . . I Am No Devil, For There is None:



atheistrepublic.com

2 Nephi 28:28 He That Is Built upon the Rock . . . He That is Built upon a Sandy Foundation:



masterbuilder.biz

2 Nephi 28:30 **Line upon Line, Precept upon Precept:**

[INCLUDE BRANT GARDNER'S REMARKS HERE?]

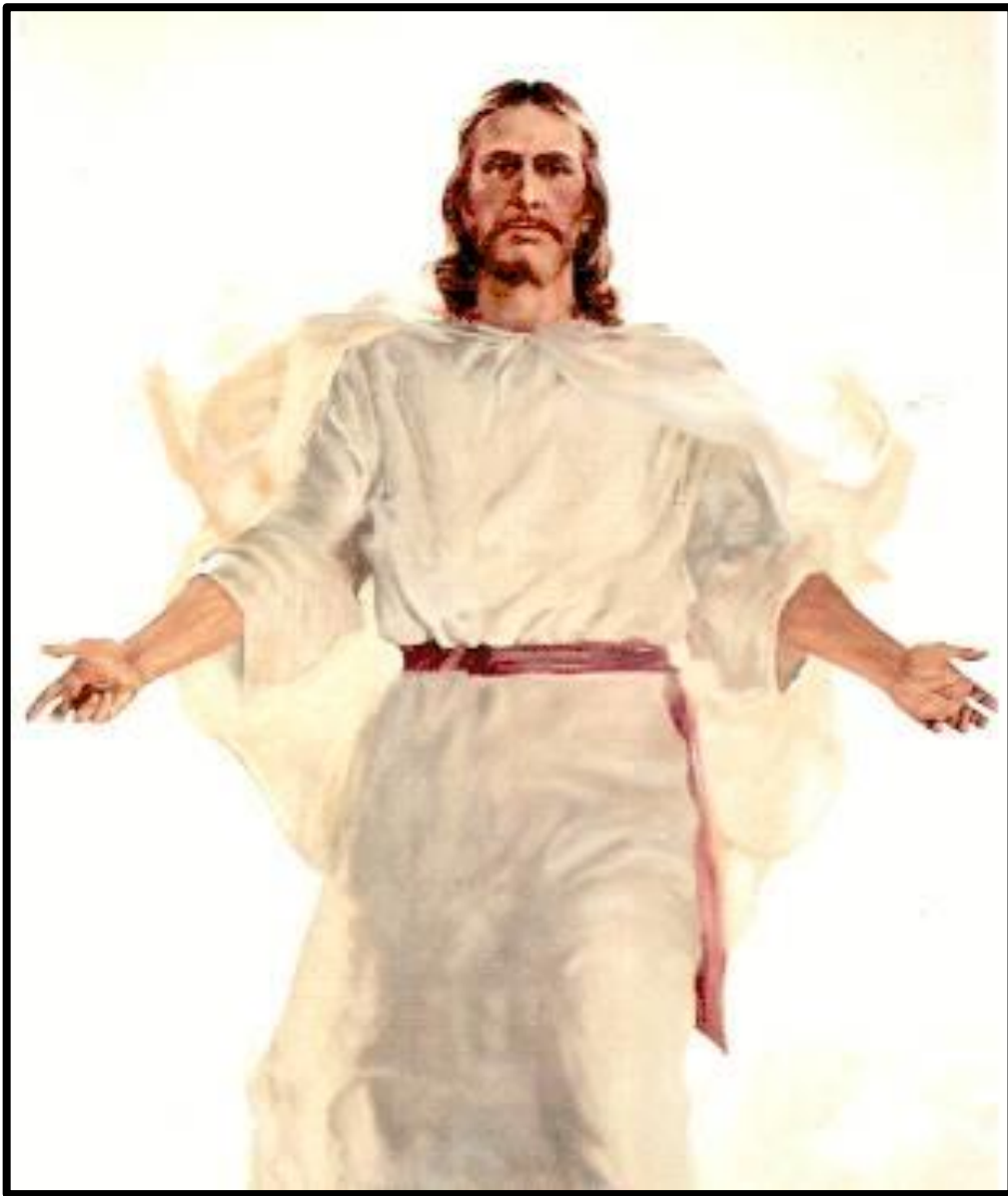
Do we continually measure up to the precepts that we have been given?



Do we measure up?

normanrockwellvt.com

2 Nephi 28:32 **For Mine Arm is Lengthened Out All the Day Long:**



The Lord with outstretched arms

dancinginfaith.wordpress.com

Chapter 29

2 Nephi 29:1 **I Shall Proceed to Do a Marvelous Work among Them:**

This represents the fifth time that Nephi has mentioned this doctrine. Apparently, he understands that we learn through repetition. The marvelous work and a wonder which the Lord brings to pass in the last days is the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth, the gathering of Israel, and the fulfillment of the covenants that the Lord has made with the ancient prophets. See also commentary for 1 Ne 14:7 and 2 Ne 25:17.

George Q. Cannon writes:

It is a marvelous work. It is contrary to all human experience outside of this Church, to see people dwelling together as the Latter-day Saints have done and do in these valleys. It is phenomenal in its character, because nowhere else can you see an exhibition of it. Men say all manner of things concerning it because of its strangeness, it being so different from anything else that is known. Men attempt to philosophize upon it. They try to explain the reason for it, and have recourse to all manner of views, as erroneous as they possibly can be, concerning the causes that produce these results that we see throughout these valleys, ignoring entirely the true cause and denying the possibility that God is in this movement, and that His Spirit produces these results. Yet this is the only clear and sufficient reason. It is the only one by which all this can be accounted for.

Human power could not have done what has been done among the Latter-day Saints. It was beyond the power of human wisdom; it was beyond the limit of human power. It required a divine power to work out these grand results. For contemptible as the Latter-day Saints may be in the eyes of some, despised as they may be, this power that has brought this congregation together and that has gathered these people from the remotest parts of the earth is a grand power; it is a power that is beyond that of man. Man in no instance, in and of himself, has ever been able to accomplish anything comparable with it. And to say that there is no God in this, it would require more faith on my part to believe that than it does to believe that God is in this movement.”
(Collected Discourses 1886-1898, ed. by Brian Stuy, vol. 2, George Q. Cannon, March 1, 1891)

2 Nephi 29:1 **That I May Set My Hand Again the Second Time to Recover My People:**

When the Lord recovers his people, he gathers them, protects them, and reestablishes his covenants with them. The reference to “the second time” implies that there was a first time

that the Lord set his hand to recover the people. LeGrand Richards notes that the first time was when the Lord led Israel out of Egyptian bondage and captivity." (*A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, p. 202-203.)

2 Nephi 29:2 My Words Shall Hiss Forth unto the Ends of the Earth, For a Standard unto My People:

Bruce R. McConkie writes:

Many ancient prophecies foretold that in the last days the Lord would set up an ensign to the nations, a standard to which Israel and the righteous of all nations might gather. (Isa. 5:26; 11:10-12; 18:3; 30:17-26; 31:9; 49:22; 62:10; Zech. 9:16.) This ensign is the new and everlasting covenant, the gospel of salvation (D. & C. 49:9); it is the great latter-day Zion (D. & C. 64:41-43); it is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 228)

2 Nephi 29:3 A Bible! A Bible!:

The word "Bible" comes from "Biblea," an original Greek word not used by Hebrew prophets. Its presence, therefore in chapter 29 of 2 Nephi (the only place the word "bible" is mentioned in the Book of Mormon) is regarded as an anachronism by critics of the Book of Mormon. However, according to Roy Weldon, we should note that the word "Bible" is in a prophecy by Nephi about what would happen when the Nephite record should come forth in the nineteenth century. The prophet's words are as follows:

And because my words shall hiss forth, many of the Gentiles shall say, A Bible a Bible, we have got a Bible, and there can not be any more Bible. (2 Nephi 29:3)

Prophecy is foreknowledge, so the use of the word "Bible" by Nephi is on a par with Isaiah's use of the name "Cyrus" in one of his prophecies of the future. There is excellent historical evidence from ancient historians Xenophon and Josephus that Isaiah did indeed use the name "Cyrus" long before the Babylonish captivity and the birth of Cyrus.

Josephus quotes the following message that Cyrus sent throughout Asia:

Thus saith Cyrus the king: Since God almighty hath appointed me to be king of the habitable earth, I believe that he is that God which the nation of the Israelites worship; for indeed he foretold my name by the prophets, and that I should build him a house at Jerusalem, in the country of Judea.

Josephus makes this note:

This was known to Cyrus by his reading the book which Isaiah left behind him of his prophecies, for this prophet said that God had spoken thus to him in a secret vision: "My will is, that Cyrus whom I have appointed to be king over many and great nations, send back my people to their own land, and build my temple." This was foretold by Isaiah one hundred and forty years before the temple was demolished. Accordingly, when Cyrus read this, and admired the Divine power, an earnest desire and ambition seized upon him to fulfill what was so written.--*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book II, p. 321.

Thus, Nephi was doing nothing that hadn't been done before.

(Roy E. Weldon, *Book of Mormon Deeps*, Vol. III, p. 301-302.)

2 Nephi 29:3 **A Bible! A Bible!:**

According to Donald Parry, Parallelism is universally recognized as the characteristic feature of biblical Hebrew poetry." . . . Chiasmus is a form of inverted parallelism. . . . A good example is found in 2 Nephi 29:3-6:

And because my words shall hiss forth--many of the Gentiles shall say:

- A A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible.
- B But thus saith the Lord God: O fools, they shall have a Bible;
- C and it shall proceed forth from the Jews, mine ancient covenant people.
- D And what thank they the Jews for the Bible which they receive from them?
- E Yea, what do the Gentiles mean?
- F Do they remember the travails, and the labors, and the pains of the Jews, and
their diligence unto me,
- G in bringing forth salvation unto the Gentiles?
- G O ye Gentiles,
- F have ye remembered the Jews, mine ancient covenant people?
- E Nay; but ye have cursed them, and have hated them, and have not sought to
recover them.
- D But behold, I will return all these things upon your own heads;
- C for I the Lord have not forgotten my people.
- B Thou fool, that shall say:
- A A Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible.

(Donald W. Parry, *The Book of Mormon Text Reformatted according to Parallelistic Patterns*, p. 108.)

2 Nephi 29:3 **A Bible! A Bible! We Have Got a Bible:**

Most people who cry, we have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible, have no idea why they believe that. Some will quote the passage in Rev. 22:18-19:

‘For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.’

They argue that John was declaring that nothing could be added to the Bible or taken away from the Bible. This is their proof that the heavens closed after the Bible was written.

This argument implies that John was writing the book of Revelation as the last chapter of the New Testament. It is in this context only that the passage above can be construed to refer to the entire Bible. This thought process is false for the following reasons—first the books that we know as the New Testament were not compiled at the time of John’s writing. They were scattered epistles gathered together sometime later. Second, John is thought to have written the epistles of John after writing the book of Revelation—demonstrating that the passage does not mean that there can be no more revelation. Third, the context of the passage itself demonstrates that John was talking about the book of Revelation not the entire Bible. When John says, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book he is referring to the plagues discussed in Revelation 15 &16 not the plagues written in the New Testament. The New Testament is not a book of plagues, the book of Revelation is. Fourth, a very similar passage is found in Deuteronomy 4:2:

‘Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.’

If such a passage is meant to imply that there cannot be any more scripture, then everything in the Bible after Deuteronomy must be false.

Those who declare that the Bible is the only revelation that God ever intended for his children also claim that the Bible is perfect. They contend that all man ever needs to know regarding God and salvation is contained in its pages. McConkie and Millet comment on this view:

“The fundamental error of Bible cultists is the doctrine of Bible infallibility. This tenet holds that the Bible must be ‘completely authoritative and trustworthy in all that it asserts as factual, whether in matters of theology, history, or science.’ The Bible, it is held, ‘does not contain error of any kind.’

“It has to be significant that the Bible makes no such claim for itself: There is not a single passage of scripture that can properly be used to sustain such a view. For is there any agreement among those maintaining such a position as to what version of the Bible should be used or what the Bible is saying on a host of matters.

“...To claim for the Bible what it does not claim for itself is to misuse the Bible. The Bible does not claim to be the constitution of the church, it does not claim to be infallible, nor does it claim to be the answer in all things. What the Bible does claim is that whenever God had a people that he acknowledged as his own he spoke to them through living prophets who then added those words to the canon of scripture. The purpose and spirit of the Bible is to open the heavens, not to seal them.” (McConkie and Millet, *Sustaining and Defending the Faith*, p. 40, 50)

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

2 Nephi 29:3 Many Shall Say in That Day: A Bible! A Bible! We Have Got a Bible, and There Cannot Be Any More Bible:

A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible" (2 Nephi 9:3) Lee Donaldson notes that the Bible's prestige was at an all time high in the United States as the Book of Mormon rolled off Grandin's press in 1830 (See Philip Barlow, *Mormons and the Bible*, 8). Although there were isolated attacks on its contents, its supreme authority in the United States was generally well-accepted.

The Book of Mormon, however, contained a disturbing insight--that the Bible came forth in purity from the Jews, but its plain and precious parts were taken away by the Gentiles "that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men" (See 1 Nephi 13:25-29). Indeed, the Prophet Joseph Smith would declare in 1832 that "From sundry revelations which have been received, it was apparent that many important points touching the salvation of man, had been taken from the Bible, or lost before it was compiled" (*History of the Church*, 1:245). He declared, "I believe the Bible as it read when it came from the pen of the original writers. Ignorant translators, careless transcribers, or designing and corrupt priests have committed many errors." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 327.)

So what plain and precious parts were taken away from the Bible? What evidence do we have? How were they taken away? Bart Ehrman, an Associate Professor of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina, chronicles in his book, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, how

the early Christian church changed many of the early texts of the Bible to fit its particular theology. He notes that there are 5,366 copies of the original New Testament texts that have survived over time. "Strikingly, with the exception of the smallest fragments, no two of these copies are exactly alike in all their particulars. No one knows how many differences, or variant readings, occur among the surviving witnesses, but they must number in the hundreds of thousands" (Ehrman, 27). He continues, "Scribes sometimes changed their manuscripts to render them more patently orthodox [i.e. they aligned them with their own theology] (Ehrman, 29).

One example will illustrate the point. Joseph Smith said on April 6, 1844,

I shall comment on the very first Hebrew word in the Bible; I will make a comment on the very first sentence of the history of creation in the Bible--"Berosheit" I want to analyze the word. Baith--in, by, through and everything else. Rosh--the head. Sheit--grammatical termination. When the inspired man wrote it, he did not put the baith there. An old Jew without any authority added the word; he thought it too bad to begin to talk about the head! It read first, 'The head one of the Gods brought forth the Gods.' That is the true meaning of the words. *Baurau* signifies to bring forth. . . . Thus the head God brought forth the Gods in the grand council. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 348.)

If "plain and precious parts" were taken away from the Bible, then where are we to turn for truth after these deliberate corruptions of scripture? The Book of Mormon itself provides the answer--"For, behold, saith the Lamb: I will manifest myself unto thy seed, that they shall write many things which I shall minister unto them, which shall be plain and precious; and after thy seed shall be destroyed, and dwindle in unbelief, and also the seed of thy brethren, behold, these things shall be hid up, to come forth unto the Gentiles, by the gift and power of the Lamb" (1 Nephi 13:35).

[Lee Donaldson, "Plain and Precious Parts," *Book of Mormon Commentary*, www.ldsworld.com]
[See the commentary on 1 Nephi 13:25-29]

2 Nephi 29:3 **A Bible! A Bible! We Have Got a Bible and There Cannot Be Any More Bible:**

When the Book of Mormon was first published in 1830, it contained the following prophecy: "and because my words [the Book of Mormon] shall hiss forth--many of the gentiles shall say A Bible! A Bible! we have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible" (2 Nephi 29:3).

Richardson, Richardson and Bentley write that for evidence to their unfounded objection to additional scripture, critics often cite Revelations 22:18-19, which forbids *mankind* from adding to or taking "away from the words of the book of *this* prophecy," and accuse Joseph Smith of doing just that. They are apparently unaware that this same mandate was given over a thousand years earlier in Deuteronomy 4:2: "Ye shall not add unto the words which I command you, neither shall

ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." This reasoning would eliminate the vast majority of the Holy Bible from Deuteronomy chapter 5 on to Revelations chapter 22--over a thousand pages of the *word of God*. Clearly the warnings in Revelations and Deuteronomy apply only to mankind, and not to God. If the great Jehovah wishes to add to His words, who is man to forbid Him?

(Allen H. Richardson, David E. Richardson and Anthony E. Bentley, *1000 Evidences for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: Part Two-A Voice from the Dust: 500 Evidences in Support of the Book of Mormon*, p. 91.) [See the commentary on 1 Nephi 13:26]

2 Nephi 29:4 Do they remember the travails, and the labors:

Royal Skousen notes that in the Printers Manuscript, the word in this verse was "travels" instead of travails. Skousen writes that in all cases where the text should have read "travails" the scribe wrote "travels." A letter dated February 10, 1879 from John Gilbert to James Cobb is cited for insight here. It reads: "In one instance he [Oliver Cowdery] was looking over the manuscript, when the word 'travail' occurred twice in the form, but spelled in the manuscript, *travel*. Mr. Grandin when reading the proof pronounced the word correctly, but Cowdery did not seem to know the difference." The implication here is that the word "travels" was a misspelling by Oliver Cowdery of the word "travails" spoken by Joseph Smith. The further implication is a verification of the translation process--- that Oliver Cowdery wrote down what he heard from oral dictation by Joseph Smith.

(Royal Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon, The Critical Text of the Book of Mormon*, Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2005, vol. 4, part 2, p. 882.)

2 Nephi 29:6 Thou Fool, That Shall Say: A Bible! We Have Got a Bible:

According to an article by Kevin Barney, at the end of the first decade of this century, Thomas Brookbank, a one-time associate editor of the *Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star*, published some articles on Hebrew idioms that suggested that *enallage*, meaning the substitution of the singular for the plural or vice versa for rhetorical effect, is present in the Book of Mormon. As Brookbank explained it, "when more than one was to share in a thought, or sentiment, the plural was sometimes used to show that the single individual chiefly in mind was not the only one to whom it was applicable, and, conversely, when more than one was to be included, the singular could be substituted for the plural to show, among other things, that those to whom the thought or command, etc., was directed were not viewed collectively only, but as individuals also, who separately composed the mass." 2 Nephi 29:3 reads, "And because my words shall hiss forth-- many of the *Gentiles* shall say: A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible."

The Lord then responds to the Gentiles (plural) in verses 4 and 5, as numerous verbal clues attest. Finally, in verse 6, the Lord says, "*Thou fool, that shall say: A Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible. Have ye obtained a Bible save it were by the Jews?*" Here the singular "thou" appears to be an example of enallage, driving home the foolishness of the idea to anyone who would entertain it.

(Kevin L. Barney, "Enallage in the Book of Mormon," in *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, F.A.R.M.S., Spring 1994, p. 113, 116, 140.)

2 Nephi 29:6 **Thou Fool That Shall Say: A Bible! We Have Got a Bible:**

Matthew Brown comments: What of the argument that the Bible contains the *complete* word of God and there is, therefore, no need for further scripture? The Bible itself provides clear evidence that it is not complete since it mentions scriptural texts that are now missing. The "lost" books of the Bible include:

- Book of the Covenant (Exodus 24:7)
- Book of the Wars of the Lord (Numbers 21:14)
- Book of Jasher (Joshua 10:13; 2 Samuel 1:18)
- Book of the Acts of Solomon (1 Kings 11:41)
- Book of the Manner of the Kingdom (1 Samuel 10:25)
- Book of Nathan the Prophet (1 Chronicles 29:29; 2 Chronicles 9:29)
- Book of Shemaiah the Prophet (2 Chronicles 12:15)
- Book of Jehu (2 Chronicles 20:34)
- Book of Samuel the Seer (1 Chronicles 29:29)
- Book of Gad the Seer (1 Chronicles 29:29; 2 Chronicles 2:29)
- Visions of Iddo the Seer (2 Chronicles 9:29; 12:15; 13:22)
- The Sayings of the Seers (2 Chronicles 33:19)
- Prophecy of Ahijah (2 Chronicles 9:29)
- Acts of Abijah (2 Chronicles 13:22)
- Acts of Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:22)
- Lost Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 5:9)
- Lost Epistle to the Ephesians (Ephesians 3:3)
- Lost Epistle to the Laodiceans (Colossians 4:16)
- Lost Epistle from Jude (Jude 1:3)
- Lost Book of Enoch (Jude 1:14-15)

In addition to these lost books of scripture, there is presently no biblical text that records the prophecy that Jesus Christ would be "called a Nazarene" (Matthew 2:23). Nor do we presently possess another important prophecy concerning the Son of God. "Thus it is *written*, that Christ

should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead" (Luke 24:46, emphasis added). The apostle Luke informs us that before he penned his own book "*many . . . eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word*" had "taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us" (Luke 1:1, emphasis added). Where are these records? Does the Bible at least provide us with a *complete* record of Christ's earthly ministry? Certainly not. The apostle John informs us that "there are also *many* other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (John 21:25), emphasis added; see also John 20:30). And what of the Savior's post-resurrection teachings. The Bible testifies that Jesus spent 40 full days, after He had arisen from the grave, instructing His disciples on things "pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3). Where are the records of these important truths?

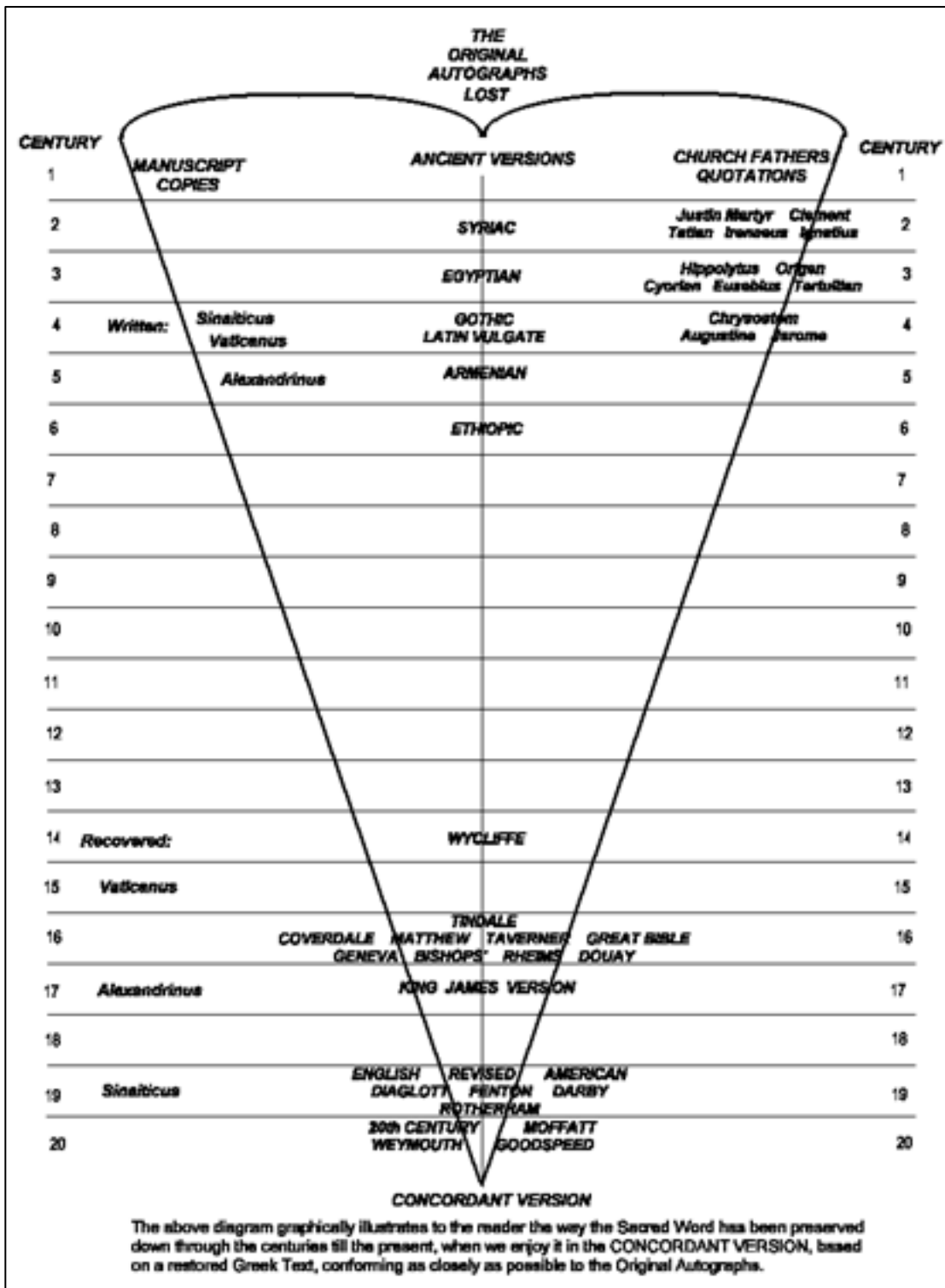
So is it accurate to say that the Bible contains the *final* word of God? No, certainly not. In the Book of Mormon the Lord lays out the fallacy of such an idea. "Thou fool, that shall say: 'A Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible.'" (2 Nephi 29:6).

(Matthew B. Brown, *All Things Restored: Confirming the Authenticity of LDS Beliefs*, p. 185-186.)

2 Nephi 29:6 **Have Ye Obtained a Bible Save It Were by the Jews?:**

In 2 Nephi 29, a statement is made concerning the origin of the Bible: "Have ye obtained a bible save it were by the Jews?" (2 Nephi 29:6). According to Hugh Nibley, it's interesting that not only the New Testament was all written by Jews, but the Old Testament too was what gave them the Bible. Remember Jerome? The Latin Bible is Jerome's Bible. Reuchlin with the Reformation was the first one to really get into the Hebrew Bible. It was the Hebrew and Jerome's and Luther's bible [that influenced the King James]. Jerome lived fifteen years in Bethlehem. He worked among the Jews all that time. He gave us the Latin vulgate, the standard Roman Catholic Bible. He lived right among the Jews when he wrote it, all those many years in Bethlehem. Reuchlin and Luther were busily studying Hebrew. It's from them we get our King James Bible more than anyone else. The King James Bible translators relied quite heavily on Luther's Bible. They depended a lot on Luther. In order to do this, of course, Reuchlin and the others became ardent Hebraists. They worked with the Jews, etc.

(Hugh W. Nibley, *Teachings of the Book of Mormon*, Semester 1, p. 351.) [See also the commentary on 1 Nephi 5:11 concerning the Septuagint]



How we got our Bible

sithtech.net

2 Nephi 29:10 And Because That I Have Spoken One Word, Ye Need Not Suppose That I Cannot Speak Another:

Nephi quotes the Lord as saying to those in the last days:

And because that I have spoken one word ye need not suppose that I cannot speak another; for my work is not yet finished; neither shall it be until the end of man, neither from that time henceforth and forever. Wherefore, because that ye have a Bible ye need not suppose that it contains all my words; neither need ye suppose that I have not caused more to be written."



The Bible and The Book of Mormon

lds.org

It is interesting how some people can hold so tightly to perceived teachings received anciently by revelation to the Lord's servants, and yet deny the possibility of that same revelatory process to men in the Latter-days. Although it is not the intention of this commentary to "go on the negative" and personally attack or disparage other people's ideas, yet because of the Lord's words of warning here in 2 Nephi concerning the reasoning of men in the latter-days, I will relate the following story by Fred Collier:

I used to go to the state fair and when I went, I would always visit the anti-Mormon

exhibits. On one occasion I got talking to a Baptist who was attending Bible school in preparation for the ministry. When he started talking about Salvation by Grace, insisting as they generally do, that works are not a necessary factor in the Plan of Salvation, I asked him--inasmuch as the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have confessed Jesus--why is it that you would deny them Salvation?

His answer was that "Mormons do not believe in the right theological Jesus--they are *polytheists* and no polytheist can be saved!" In other words Mormons have an extra task put upon them--all the other "Christians" can believe in any one of a thousand different and contradictory doctrines, but they are all saved in a pile regardless--but the Mormons must believe in true theology or they will be damned--in other words, only Mormons must have works!

In the process of our discussion I asked him whether or not he thought the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would be heirs of Salvation and he answered that they would. I then began to point out to him, that in keeping with the archaeological and historical discoveries of this century, most "Christian" scholars have now come to the conclusion that the Patriarchs were Polytheists--even the Bible bears witness of it--and it is now regarded as a fact--and no honest scholar will deny it!

Much to my surprise, the gentleman to whom I was speaking acknowledged the truth of what I had said . . . "Well then," I asked, "how can you consistently deny Salvation to the Mormons on the grounds that they are Polytheists, and still believe that the Patriarchs will receive Salvation, even though by your own admission, they also were polytheists?"

"Well," he said, rather chagrined, "because today we have the Bible, but the Patriarchs did not!" This is an incredible revelation! The Bible tells us that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob received personal visitations from God^{xii} . . . they knew God personally, for they had seen Him face to face. What is incredible is that the "Christians" . . . believe that they are more favored than the Patriarchs because they have the book that tells the story. After all, with a Bible in your hand, who needs God or revelation!

It would seem that the "Christians" have converted to a new form of "Idolatry"--"Bible-worship," as they call it! They have virtually replaced God with the Bible--a god composed of wood pulp and ink--covered with black cowhide leather, and pages that are lined with Gold--set high upon the podium before the people, where all can both see and worship! How truly did the Book of Mormon prophesy of them--"A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible"! (2 Nephi 29:3, 6)

(Fred C. Collier, "Doctrine of the Priesthood: New Light on the Ancient Hebrew/Christian Doctrine on Deity," Part 1., p. 13-15.)

2 Nephi 29:12 I Shall Speak unto the Jews . . . unto the Nephites . . . unto All Nations of the Earth:

According to Donald Parry, "staircase parallelism" is a (Hebrew) poetical device where there is an apparent stepping up from one sense to another, until at the pinnacle is a culmination of thought.

A characteristic often found in staircase poetry is the idea of an ascension from specific to general things. 2 Nephi 29:12 is illustrative of this.

For behold,
I shall speak unto the *Jews*
and they shall write it;
and I shall also speak unto the *Nephites*
and they shall write it;
and I shall also speak unto *the other tribes of the house of Israel,*
which I have led away, and they shall write it;
and I shall also speak unto *all nations of the earth*
and they shall write it.

(Donald W. Parry, *The Book of Mormon Text Reformatted according to Parallelistic Patterns*, F.A.R.M.S., p. xxi-xxiii.)

2 Nephi 29:12 I Shall Also Speak unto the Other Tribes of the House of Israel . . . and They Shall Write It:

The lost ten tribes will produce another witness that Jesus is the Christ. Their record will contain the story of Christ's visit to them after his ascension and visit to the Nephites, "But now I go unto the Father, and also to show myself unto the lost tribes of Israel, for they are not lost unto the father, for he knoweth wither he hath taken them" (3 Ne 17:4).

This branch of Israel is by far the largest, at least by the number of involved tribes. They were led north after the Assyrian captivity and have since been referred to as the Lost Ten Tribes. It is apparent from the scriptures that many of these lost Israelites were scattered all over the earth. It is equally apparent that a main body retained its identity and heritage. Proof of this is seen in the fact that they were a cohesive body that the Lord could visit in the meridian of time (3 Ne 17:4), that they had their own prophets who would record this visit and other prophecies (v. 12), and that they will return as a cohesive unit from the north to receive their temple blessings at the hands of the Ephraimites (D & C 133:26-32). Their brethren who have been scattered are meanwhile being gathered by the great missionary effort of the latter days.

Bruce R. McConkie writes:

“We have no knowledge of the location or condition of that part of the Ten Tribes who went into the north country.’

“Esdras, an apocryphal writer, records this version of their escape from Assyria: ‘Those are the ten tribes, which were carried away prisoners out of their own land in the time of Osea the king, whom Salmanasar the king of Assyria led away captive, and he carried them over the waters, and so came they into another land. But they took this counsel among themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a further country, where never mankind dwelt, That they might there keep their statutes, which they never kept in their own land. And they entered into Euphrates by the narrow passage of the river. For the most High then shewed signs for them, and held still the flood, till they were passed over. For through that country there was a great way to go, namely, of a year and a half: and the same region is called **Arsareth**. Then dwelt they there until the latter times; and now when they shall begin to come, The Highest shall stay the stream again, that they may go through.’ (*Apocrypha*, 2 Esdras 13:40-47)

“...The Lost Tribes are not lost unto the Lord. In their northward journeyings they were led by prophets and inspired leaders. They had their Moses and their Lehi, were guided by the spirit of revelation, kept the law of Moses, and carried with them the statutes and judgments which the Lord had given them in age past. They were still a distinct people many hundreds of years later, for the resurrected Lord visited and ministered among them following his ministry on this continent among the Nephites. (3 Ne. 16:1-4; 17:4.) Obviously he taught them in the same way and gave them the same truths which he gave his followers in Jerusalem and on the American continent; and obviously they recorded his teachings, thus creating volumes of scripture comparable to the Bible and Book of Mormon. (2 Ne. 29:12-14.)

“In due course the Lost Tribes of Israel will return and come to the children of Ephraim to receive their blessings. This great gathering will take place under the direction of the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for he holds the keys of ‘the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north.’ (D. & C. 110:11.) Keys are the right of presidency the power to direct; and by this power the Lost Tribes will return, with ‘their prophets’ and their scriptures to ‘be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim.’ (D. & C. 133:26-35.)” [*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 455-458.]

[Note* Intriguingly, the 1901 Jewish Encyclopedia has the following commentary for “Arsareth”:

Arzareth

The name of the land beyond the great river, far away from the habitation of man, in which the Ten Tribes of Israel will dwell, observing the laws of Moses, until the time of the restoration, according to IV Esd. 13:45. **Columbus identified America with this land.** (See Kayserling's "Christopher Columbus," translated by Dr. C. Gross, p. 15.)

The name, it has been suggested by Schiller-Szinessy, is taken from Deuteronomy 29:24-27, "Because they forsook the covenant of the Lord . . . and went and served other gods . . . the Lord rooted them out of their land . . . and cast them into another land [erez aH'eret] as this day." This passage is made to refer (in Mishnah Sanh. 10:3) to the Ten Tribes (compare Tosef., Sanh. 13:12 Bab. ib. 110 b Yer. ib. 10:29 c Ab. R. N., ed. Schechter, A, 36:108, and Bacher, "Agada der Tannaiten," 1:143). But different opinions are expressed by Akiba and Eliezer— the traditions are rather confused as to the names— whether the Ten Tribes may be expected to return or not, since this point is not determined in the Scriptural verse. One of them takes the words "as this day" to signify that "as the day goeth, but doth not return, so shall they who are cast off not return" the other explains the words: "as the day begins with the darkness of the night, but turns into day, so shall the darkness of their banishment be turned into bright daylight" (Mishnah Sanh. l.c.). The fourth Book of Esdras took the latter view, which was adopted also by R. Judah ha-Nasi in the Tosefta (l.c.), who refers to Isaiah 27:13 .

Bibliography : Schiller-Szinessy, in Journal of Philology , 3:114 Neubauer, Jew. Quart. Rev. 1:16. J. Jr. K.

[www.studylight.org]

2 Nephi 29:13 **The Jews Shall Have the Words of the Nephites:**

Wade Brown notes that it has been said that "poetry is what is lost in translation." In other words, when poetic lines are converted from one language to another, the rhyming sounds are lost. Consider the child's poem:

Roses are red, violets are blue
Sugar is sweet, and so are you.

When put into Spanish it becomes:

Las rosas son rojas, las violetas son azules.
El azucar es dulce, y usted es tambien.

In English "you" rhymes with "blue," but in Spanish "tambien" does not rhyme with "azules." There is more to poetry than this simple repetition of similar sound, but the illustration suffices to demonstrate the problem that translation creates.

This explains why a poet may be very popular within one area of the world but entirely

unappreciated in others. It also explains why the sound of some spiritual writing is considered beautiful beyond expression to one people but uninspiring to some others.

But what if there was a divine poetry so universal in its application that it could be recognized and appreciated in every language. What if it was originally composed in Hebrew, but when properly translated into English, Russian, Chinese or another language, it retained its essence and beauty?

Poetic rhyming is actually the repetition of sound; either the same sound or similar sound. But as demonstrated, a universal poetry could not use the repetition of sound for different languages. However, if the repetition was not the repetition of sound but the repetition of meaning, then it could be easily transferred from one language to another.

Such an unusual poetry has been discovered, or rather rediscovered, and in the last century the academic community came to recognize it within the Hebrew and Greek testaments of the Bible. . . . Some have titled this ancient poetic language style "Hebrew parallelism," although it is not entirely unique to early Hebrew. . . . Unlike other poetic forms, the parallel phrasing of the ancient prophets is not lost when carefully translated from one language to another. For example, when Nephi foretold the future of the Bible and the Book of Mormon he said: "the Jews shall have the words of the Nephites, and the Nephites shall have the words of the Jews and the Nephites and the Jews shall have the words of the lost tribes of Israel and the lost tribes of Israel shall have the words of the Nephites and the Jews. (2 Nephi 29:13)

When the passage is placed in an appropriate format, its parallel nature becomes obvious. It is worth noting that in this case the inverted parallel form is repeated in the next set of phrases. This is a double inverted parallel:

1. the Jews
 2. shall have the words of
 3. the Nephites
 - 3' and the Nephites
 - 2' shall have the words of
 - 1' the Jews

4. and the Nephites and the Jews
 5. shall have the words of
 6. the lost tribes of Israel
 - 6' and the lost tribes of Israel
 - 5' shall have the words of
 - 4' the Nephites and the Jews. (2 Nephi 29:13)

Rhyming poetry is lost in translation, but notice what occurs when the parallelism of this verse is translated into Spanish:

1. los Judios
2. tendran las palabras de
3. los Nefitas
- 3' y los Nefitas
- 2' tendran las palabras de
- 1' los Judios

4. y los Nefitas y los Judios
5. tendran las palabras de
6. las tribus perdidas de Israel
- 6' y las tribus perdidas de Israel
5. tendran las palabras de
- 4' los Nefitas y los Judios.

Although the words have changed from English to Spanish, the repetition and pattern of words is obvious even to those who do not understand Spanish.

Why is this a divine form? As a student of language and a teacher of religion I came to believe the axiom, "repetition is the mother of learning." Restating an idea or principle is one of the best ways to remember it and to have it become a part of our lives. . . .

During the reformation Bible translators did not understand or recognize this poetic form and in many instances selected words and sentence structures in a way that much of the parallel nature of the phrasing was covered over. When more literal and precisely translated versions are used, the parallelism or repetition of thought becomes more visible.

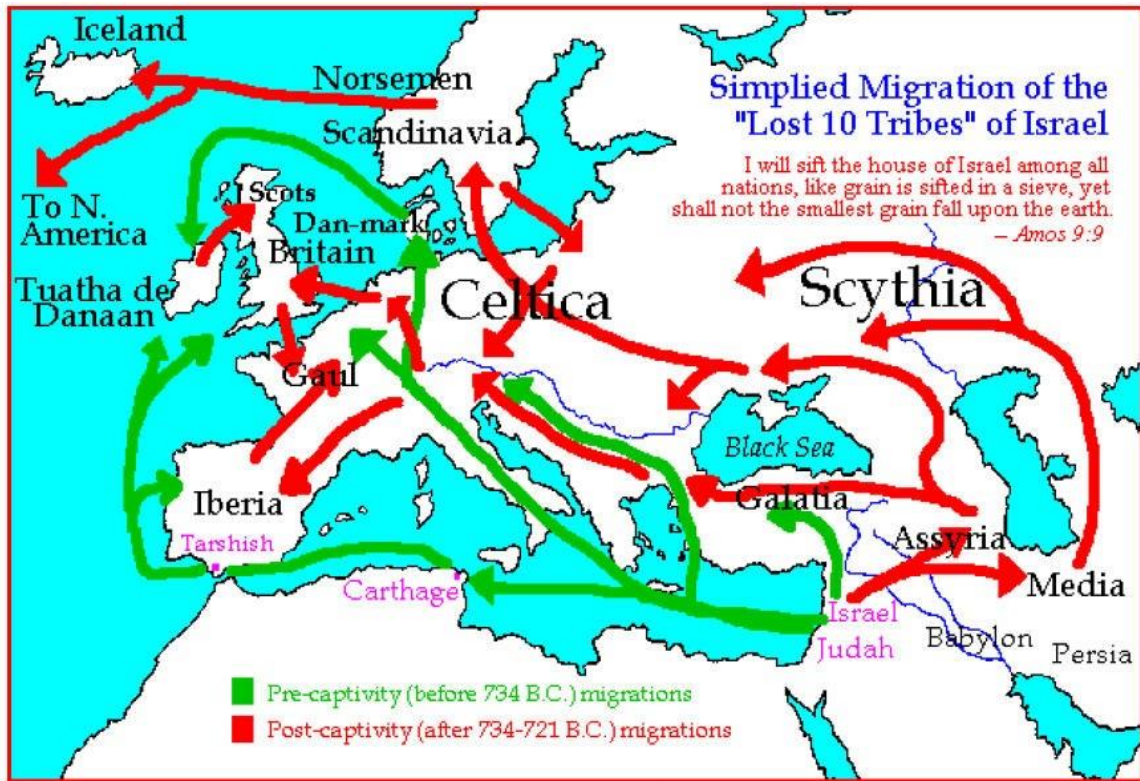
(C. Wade Brown, *The First Page of the Golden Plates*, p. 33-45.)

2 Nephi 29:13 **The Nephites and the Jews Shall Have the Words of the Lost Tribes of Israel:**

In 2 Nephi 29:12-13, Nephi recites the words of the God of the house of Israel, who also covenanted with Abraham that he would remember his seed forever:

For behold, I shall speak unto the Jews and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the Nephites and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the other tribes of the house of Israel, which I have led away, and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto all nations of the earth and they shall write it. And it shall come to pass that the Jews shall have the words of the Nephites, and the Nephites shall have the words of the Jews; and

the Nephites and the Jews shall have the words of the lost tribes of Israel; and the lost tribes of Israel shall have the words of the Nephites and the Jews.



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Concerning these events relative to the lost tribes of Israel, Bruce R. McConkie writes:

In due course the Lost Tribes of Israel will return and come to the children of Ephraim to receive their blessings. This great gathering will take place under the direction of the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for he holds the keys of "the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north" (D&C 110:11). Keys are the right of presidency, the power to direct; and by this power the Lost Tribes will return, with "their prophets" and their scriptures to "be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim." (D&C 133:26-35) [Bruce R. McConkie, *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 458] [See the commentary on 1 Nephi 22:4; 3 Nephi 16:1]

2 Nephi 29:13 **The Works of the Nephites . . . Jews, and . . . the Lost Tribes of Israel:**

In 2 Nephi 27:13-14, the Lord showed that there are to be three major written testimonies of Christ to come forth: (1) the Bible (of the Jews), (2) the Book of Mormon (of the Nephites), and (3) the records of the lost tribes of Israel, which we do not yet have. These three records are to be shared by each group so that each will eventually have the records of the others. And when Israel is gathered, the records will also be gathered. By these three records, the law of witnesses will be honored and the word of God established.

According to Robert Matthews, these records do not consist only of single books from each major branch of Israel. Just as the Bible is a collection of many books, and the Book of Mormon is a collection also, likewise the records of the ten lost tribes will probably be a collection of various books. It will tell us, when it is received, about the Savior's visit to the ten tribes after his appearance to the Nephites. However, since Ephraim was the leading tribe among the lost tribes anciently, perhaps our present Doctrine and Covenants should be viewed in perspective as a witness for Jesus Christ among latter-day Ephraim, to be combined someday with the other records of the lost tribes when they come forth.

Among the things to be accomplished by the multiple books of scripture are: (1) to give a multiple witness of Christ; (2) to show that the Lord does speak the same gospel to one people as to another, and (3) to prove that God does honor his covenant that he made with Abraham, promising to remember his seed forever (2 Nephi 29:14).

(Robert J. Matthews, "Two Ways in the World," in *Studies in Scripture: Book of Mormon*, Part 1, p. 158-159.)

2 Nephi 29:14 **I Am God, and . . . I Covenanted with Abraham That I Would Remember His Seed Forever:**

In 2 Nephi 29:14 we find the following:

And it shall come to pass that my people, which are of the house of Israel, shall be gathered home unto the lands of their possessions; and my word also shall be gathered in one. . . . I am God, and . . . I covenanted with Abraham that *I would remember his seed forever.*"

The Covenants of Israel

I will make you **A GREAT NATION**; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will **bless** those who **bless you**, And I will **curse** him who **curses you**; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Genesis 12:2-3



Descendants of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob - Genesis 50:24

biberays.com

According to Amy Hardison, in most covenant treaties of the past, the suzerain (or lord) stated that the covenant was to remain effective forever. One historian studied seventy-five hundred "eternal" treaties that were signed between 1500 B.C. and 1850 A.D. and found that in reality the treaties lasted an average of only two years.^{xiii} Like mortal lords, God intends his covenants to span generations and even eternities. Unlike temporal treaties, however, the Lord's covenants do last. In the book of Deuteronomy we learn that the children of Israel were redeemed from Egypt because of the covenants made with the fathers (see Deuteronomy 4:37; 7:8). From our latter-day perspective we see that the covenants God made with Abraham extended not only to the Exodus but even thousands of years beyond, to the current gathering of Israel.

(Amy Blake Hardison, "Being a Covenant People," in *Covenants Prophecies and Hymns of the Old Testament*, p. 26.)

Chapter 30

2 Nephi 30:2 **As Many of the Gentiles As Will Repent Are the Covenant People of the Lord:**

The difference between Jews and Gentiles, which was so important to the Jews of Christ's day, is abolished with the gospel of Jesus Christ. "There is neither Jew nor Greek . . . for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:28-9). Those Gentiles who repent and receive Christ as their Savior will become the covenant people of the Lord. They are effectively adopted into the house of Israel. Conversely, those Jews who reject Christ will be cast off as though no promises were ever made to them.

The significance of being adopted into the house of Israel begins with the promises made to Abraham. Because of Abraham's great faith and obedience, even that he would offer his son Isaac, the Lord promised him, That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed (Gen 22:17-8). Those who understand the true meaning of the promise of eternal life and eternal increase understand that seed multiplied as the stars of the heaven is an eternal and not merely a mortal promise. Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies, means that the Lord will bless them, prosper them, and protect them from political oppression. In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed is fulfilled in several respects. First, the house of Israel will perform temple ordinances for the returning ten tribes, becoming saviors on mount Zion, "And there shall they [the 10 tribes] fall down and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim" (D & C 133:32). Second, the Savior of the world and most of the prophets were to come through the lineage of Israel. Third, the gospel will be brought to the world primarily through the house of Israel. Fourth, the world has been blessed by the contributions to art, science, inventions, industry, philosophy, politics, etc. made by the descendants of Abraham.

Other promises related to the covenant made with Abraham are to be had in the temple of God. John the Revelator explained that those who are sanctified by Jesus Christ are made kings and priests unto God (Rev 1:6). This phrase could be rendered kings and priests in the house of Israel for it is through the house of Israel that the Lord establishes his church and reigns in his kingdom, for now and for all time. All of these promises that are part of the Abrahamic covenant are available to every member of the church. They are promises with incredible eternal consequence which are often under appreciated.

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

2 Ne 30:3-5 **The Gospel of Jesus Christ Shall Be Declared among Them [the Remnant of Our Seed]:**

Richard Rust writes:

“In its overall structure, the Book of Mormon begins and ends with concern for the Lamanites receiving the gospel. Reiterating the main points from the title page, Nephi says that through the Book of Mormon the Lamanites shall know they are of Israel and through it ‘they shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ’ (2 Nephi 30:5; see 30:1-6). Then toward the end, Mormon says much the same thing: ‘Know ye that ye are of the house of Israel. . . . Know ye that ye must come to the knowledge of your fathers, and repent of all your sins and iniquities, and believe in Jesus Christ’ (Mormon 7:2, 5). At the physical center of the book is the narrative of the conversion of the Lamanites. This central part begins with the decree of the king of the Lamanites that Ammon and his brethren should be free to preach the word of God throughout all the land, and ends with gratitude by these great missionaries for the thousands of Lamanite souls ‘brought to behold the marvelous light of God’ (Alma 26:3). The narrative high point of the book is the ministry of the resurrected Savior. While discoursing to both the Lamanites and Nephites before him, Jesus as well speaks to their descendants, saying that the Book of Mormon ‘shall come forth of the Father, from [the Gentiles] unto you’ (3 Nephi 21:3). He confirms the prophecies of Isaiah that in the last days the children of Lehi will be gathered both physically and spiritually. ‘Then is the fulfilling,’ he says, ‘of the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people, O house of Israel’ (3 Nephi 20:12).

(“Richard D. Rust “The Book of Mormon, Designed for Our Day”, *FARMS: Review of Books*, vol. 2 (1990), p. 16.)

2 Nephi 30:6 **A Pure and a Delightful People:**

In early editions of the Book of Mormon this phrase read, "not many generations shall pass and they [the Lamanites] shall become a *white* and a delightful people." In 1840, under the editorial supervision of Joseph Smith, this verse was changed to "not many generations shall pass and they [the Lamanites] shall become a *pure* and delightful people" (2 Nephi 30:6). Nevertheless, for some unknown reason, subsequent editions failed to include this change and reverted to the wording of previous editions. This omission tended to spawn incorrect ideas to the effect that the "Lamanite curse" would only be lifted when the skin color of native Americans became "white." In 1981, the word "pure" was substituted for the word "white." According to McConkie and Millet, in the theological sense the difference is slight, "white" being the symbol of purity (see Alma 5:24; Mormon 9:6; Revelations 19:8).

(Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 1, p. 355.) [See the commentary on 2 Nephi 5:21]



"Pure and Delightful People" LDS women in Mexico

mormonwoman.org



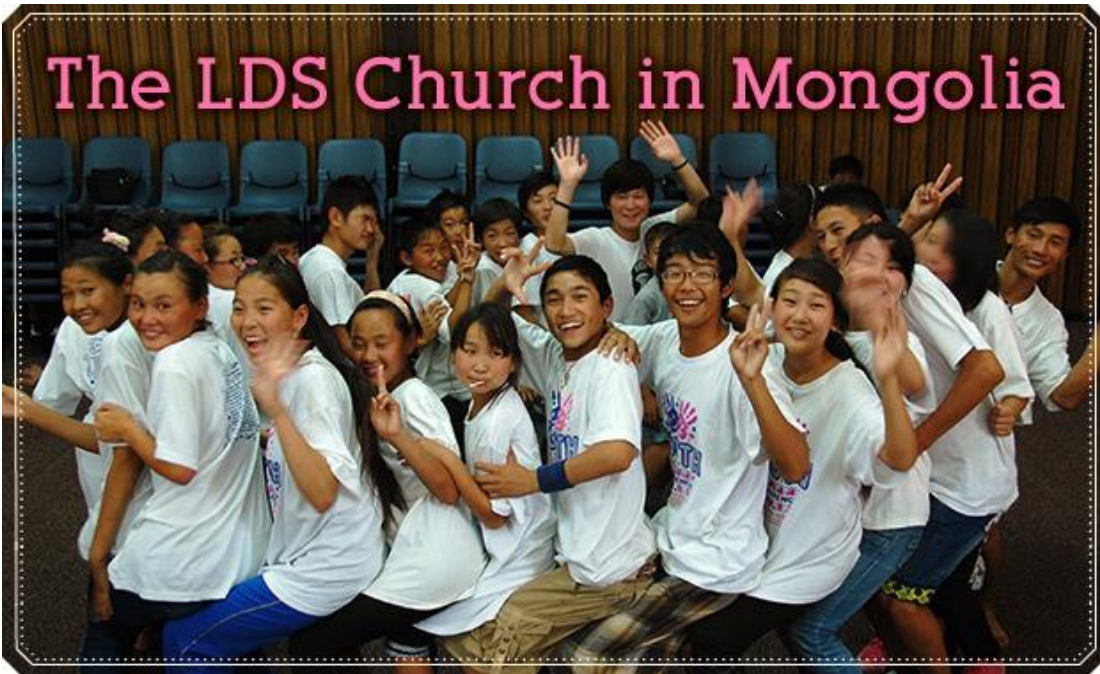
"Pure and Delightful People" LDS missionaries in Africa

blacklds.org



“Pure and Delightful People” LDS members

lds-memes.org



“Pure and Delightful People”

ldsliving.com

2 Nephi 30:7 **The Jews Which Are Scattered Also Shall Begin to Believe in Christ:**

One of the most consistent signs which is to precede the Lord's fulfillment of the promises made to the fathers regarding the restoration of the house of Israel is this sign—that the Jews shall be persuaded to believe in Christ. This sign is given in numerous other passages, 2 Ne 9:2, 2 Ne 10:7, and 2 Ne 25:16. As Nephi explains, when this happens, the Lord will set his hand...to restore his people and proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder among the children of men (2 Ne 25:17).

2 Ne 25:16 states, they (the Jews) shall be persuaded to believe in Christ, the Son of God. One could argue that the Jews of today have not yet accepted Christ in sufficient numbers to fulfill this prophecy. Such an interpretation misunderstands the difference between the way Nephi used the term, "Jews," and the way that we sometimes use the term, "Jews." If we think of the "Jews" as that group of people which recognizes its heritage, accepts the religion of Judaism, and is returning in vast numbers to the Holy Land, the scripture doesn't make sense. That group of people is not turning to Christ as their Messiah in any great numbers. When the Savior comes again there will be some of this group which ask, what are these wounds in thine hands and in thy feet (DC 55:68), signifying that they have not yet accepted Jesus Christ as the Messiah.

However, if we understand the way in which Nephi uses the term, "Jews,"—to mean anyone of the house of Israel—this prophecy makes a lot more sense (see 2 Ne 9:1-2). In that sense, all those of Nephite and Lamanite descent who have accepted the Book of Mormon and the gospel of Jesus Christ have fulfilled this prophecy. All those who lived in Europe and America, who unknowingly are of the blood of Israel, and accepted the gospel have fulfilled this prophecy. The blood of Israel has been scattered all over the earth. Those who accept the gospel are either adopted into the house of Israel or belong to it by birthright, even if they did not realize their own lineage. This is what Nephi was speaking of when he said, And it shall come to pass that the Jews which are scattered also shall begin to believe in Christ (2 Ne 30:7).

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]

Chapter 31

2 Nephi chapters 31-32 (**Sermons**):

Brant Gardner writes that 2 Nephi chapters 31 and 32 are separate chapters in the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon, where they are numbered chapter XIII and chapter XIV. According to Gardner, these two chapters should be seen as a unit that Nephi intended to be separate from previous chapters. He conjectures that they were sermons that Nephi delivered on two different occasions, and with some minor modifications and editing, included on the plates.

Chapter 31 has a clear conclusion, but chapter 32 continues the theme of the Holy Ghost from chapter 31 and thus feels like a continuation of that discourse. The introduction to chapter 32 (verse 1) also suggests that this was a continuation.

(Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical and Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon*: Volume 2 Second Nephi – Jacob, p. 432, 448.)

2 Nephi chapters 31-32 (**The Doctrine of Christ**):

According to Larry Dahl, the doctrine of Christ as explained by Nephi in 2 Nephi includes the following elements:

1. Approaching the task "with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God, but with real intent" (2 Nephi 31:13)
2. Seeking understanding, to be "brought into the light," through prayer and effort (2 Nephi 32:4, 8-9)
3. "Repenting of your sins" (2 Nephi 31:13)
4. Being "willing to take upon you the name of Christ, by baptism--yea, by following your Lord and your Savior down into the water" (2 Nephi 31:13)
5. Receiving "the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost." (2 Nephi 31:13)
6. Pressing "forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men [and] feasting upon the word of Christ" (2 Nephi 31:20; 32:3)
7. Enduring "to the end" (2 Nephi 31:20)
8. Receiving the promise of eternal life (2 Nephi 31:20).

(Larry E. Dahl, "The Doctrine of Christ: 2 Nephi 31-32," in *The Book of Mormon: Second Nephi, The Doctrinal Structure*, p. 356.)

2 Nephi 31:1 And Now, I Nephi, Make an End of My Prophesying:

This passage marks a transition point. Nephi is going to change subjects—from the workings of the Lord in the future to the practicalities of living the gospel. Chapters 31-33 represent the conclusion of Nephi’s great record. True to form, Nephi will speak in great plainness so that there can be no question as to what one must do to obtain eternal life. Let’s look at the subject matter of the next three chapters as a handbook or recipe for obtaining eternal life.

Nephi discusses:

repentance (31:5, 11-13),
baptism (31: 4-19),
the gift of the Holy Ghost (31: 12-18),
obedience (31: 10-12),
enduring to the end (31: 15-16, 20),
following Christ (31:10, 16),
faith, hope, and charity (31: 20. 2 Ne 33:8-11),
feasting on the words of Christ (31: 20, 2 Ne 32:3),
following the Spirit (2 Ne 32:5,8), and
prayer (2 Ne 32:8-9).

What a brilliant collection of principles! A more complete blueprint for salvation could hardly be written.

[\[josephsmith.com.2Nephi\]](http://josephsmith.com.2Nephi)

2 Nephi 31:1 And I Cannot Write But a Few Things . . . Neither Can I Write But a Few of the Words of My Brother Jacob:

Nephi makes note that he has made an end to his prophesyings. Then Nephi reminds the reader that he is being very limited in what he has included of his own sermons and writings. Nephi also refers to what he has included from his brother Jacob. This is perhaps a good time to review the contents of 2 Nephi:

In the first four chapters of 2 Nephi, Nephi recorded the words of his father Lehi:

Chapter 1: Lehi speaks on this New covenant Promised Land.

Chapter 2: Lehi blesses his son Jacob

Chapter 3: Lehi blesses his son Joseph.

Chapter 4: Lehi blesses the sons and daughters of Laman and Lemuel, including Ishmael’s household. Lehi also blesses Sam.

In Chapter 5 Nephi narrates his separation from his brethren and his establishing of the place that they called Nephi

In 2 Nephi chapters 6 thru 11, we find Jacob's exhortation to the people which chapters include some of the writings of Isaiah.

Chapters 12 thru 24 of 2 Nephi record sequentially chapters 2 thru 14 of Isaiah.

Then in 2 Nephi chapter 25, Nephi begins to speak:

Chapter 25: Nephi speaks on Isaiah's prophecies of the future.

Chapter 26: Nephi continues to prophesy of the future – Christ & the dispersion

Chapter 27: Nephi continues to prophesy of the future – The latter-days & a book

Chapter 28: Nephi continues to prophesy of the future – The latter-day conditions

Chapter 29: Nephi continues to prophesy of the future -- the Gathering

Chapter 30: Nephi continues to prophesy of the future – the covenant believers sustained & the wicked destroyed.

Thus 2 Nephi Chapter 31 represents a break from the prophecies, and an opportunity for Nephi to just talk about Gospel principles—things that he has already said to his people and which he is now writing on the plates for the people of the latter-days.

(Alan Miner, Personal Notes)

2 Nephi 31:2 **Wherefore . . . Wherefore:**

Nephi seems to have a peculiarity for using the term "wherefore" in his writings. In 2 Nephi chapter 31 alone Nephi uses the word "wherefore" ten times. It is worth noting here that in all the chapters of Isaiah that have been included by Nephi (Isaiah 2-14 – 2 Nephi 12-24) the word "Therefore" has almost exclusively been used. It is also interesting to note here that once we get to the book of Mosiah, and continuing on to the book of Mormon (which represents the material abridged and written by Mormon) the word used in similar contexts is primarily the word "Therefore." However, when we come to the writings of Moroni, the term used in similar contexts is primarily the word "Wherefore."

(Alan Miner, Personal Notes)

2 Nephi 31:4 The Prophet Which the Lord Showed unto Me, That Should Baptize the Lamb of God:

Here Nephi is telling his audience that he has SEEN John the Baptist. John the Baptist is mentioned in a vision of the future recorded in 1 Nephi 10 (see verse 7-10). But it is the vision of Lehi. Nephi mentions in 1 Nephi 11:1 that he “desired to know the things that my father had seen” and that he was “caught away in the Spirit of the Lord.” Nephi then records what he sees and understands but he does not mention seeing John the Baptist. This should let us know that Nephi saw many more things and many more of the Lord’s chosen people than what he records. It is intriguing to ponder who Nephi might have seen in vision and what heavenly beings he had a chance to see and converse with.

(Alan Miner, Personal Notes)

2 Nephi 31:5 The Lamb of God . . . Baptized by Water, to Fulfil All Righteousness:

Remember that John the Baptist did not want to baptize the Savior. He considered himself unworthy and understood that the ordinance was designed for the wicked. It was only at the insistence of the Savior that he acquiesced.

“Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.” (Matthew 3:13-15)

Nephi (in the words of Christ) reiterates the words of Christ recorded by Matthew by telling us that the Savior had to be baptized to "fulfill all righteousness" (2 Nephi 31:5).

Bruce R. McConkie writes:

“Nephi explains that Christ did fulfil all righteousness in being baptized in that:

1. He humbled himself before the Father;
2. He covenanted to be obedient and keep the Father's commandment;
3. He had to be baptized to gain admission to the celestial kingdom; and
4. He set an example for all men to follow. (2 Ne. 31:4-11.)

Our Lord's baptism ‘showeth unto the children of men the straightness of the path, and the narrowness of the gate, by which they should enter, he having set the example before them.’ (2 Ne. 31:9.)

If even the King of the kingdom could not return to his high state of pre-existent exaltation without complying with his own eternal law for admission to that kingdom, how can any man expect a celestial inheritance without an authorized and approved baptism? (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 71)

2 Nephi 31:6 **The Lamb of God Did Fulfil All Righteousness in Being Baptized by Water:**

According to Daniel Ludlow, the New Testament mentions the baptism of Jesus Christ, but the exact reasons why the Savior submitted to baptism are not made clear in the Bible except in the Savior's statement that He was being baptized in order "to fulfil all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15).

The Book of Mormon lists several reasons for the baptism of the Christ including the one given by the Savior himself on the eastern continent:

- (1) "to fulfil all righteousness" (2 Nephi 31:5); in other words, the Savior was baptized in order to keep the commandments of the Lord.
- (2) "He humbleth himself before the Father" (2 Nephi 31:7).
- (3) He "witnesseth unto the Father that he would be obedient unto him in keeping his commandments" (2 Nephi 31:7)
- (4) "it showeth unto the children of men the straightness of the path, and the narrowness of the gate, by which they should enter, he having set the example before them" (2 Nephi 31:9).

Although Nephi lived over 500 years before the birth of the Savior, yet he knew by the power of revelation that the Savior was going to be baptized. Furthermore, Nephi counseled his people to "*do* the things which I have told you I have seen that your Lord and your Redeemer should do; *for, for this cause* have they been shown unto me that ye might know the gate by which ye should enter" (2 Nephi 31:17). This scripture indicates very clearly that baptism was practiced, at least among the Nephites, hundreds of years before the Savior was born.

Other evidence exists, in the scriptures and elsewhere, that baptism was also performed by other groups before the birth of Christ. The *Jewish Encyclopedia* indicates that baptism was a common practice in ancient Israel: "baptism was practiced in ancient Judaism (Hasidic or Essene), first as a means of penitence . . . to receive the spirit of God, or to be permitted to stand in the presence of God, man must undergo baptism" (Vol 2, page 499). Concerning the mode of baptism, the *Encyclopedia* says " . . . the [baptism] is only valid when performed by immersion in a natural fountain or stream or in a properly constructed [vessel]. This rule was, of course, also preserved in the temple at Jerusalem" (Vol. 1, pp. 68-69).

The fact that baptism was practiced in ancient Israel might help explain why the Savior was not criticized by the orthodox Jewish people when He was baptized. The Pharisees were very quick to criticize the Savior whenever He did anything which was contrary to their law. However, not a single word of criticism concerning the baptism of Jesus Christ is found in the entire New Testament!

(Daniel H. Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, p. 153-155.) [See the commentary on 2 Nephi 9:23-24]



Christ's Baptism

catholicjournal.us

According to Cleon Skousen, the *Hastings Bible Dictionary* describes the Jewish baptism as part of their initiatory ordinance. A male candidate was first circumcised. This was followed in due time by baptism and the offering of a sacrifice. Female candidates were baptized and then they offered a sacrifice. For the baptism, each candidate was taken to "a pool, in which he stood up to his neck in water, while the great commandments of the Law were recited to him. These he promised to keep. Then a benediction was pronounced, and he plunged beneath the water, taking care to be entirely submerged" (see Vol. I, under "Baptism").

(W. Cleon Skousen, *Treasures from the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 1, p. 1166-1167.)

2 Nephi 31:8 After [Christ] Was Baptized with Water, the Holy Ghost Descended upon Him in the Form of a Dove:

Allen & David Richardson and Anthony Bentley note that the Book of Mormon was written by prophets who were conversant with Hebrew customs and language (1 Nephi 1:2). Part of the Hebrew language was a style of writing called "prophetic perfect." In the prophetic perfect style of writing, the prophet who speaks of the future describes the event as if it had already occurred. For example, "But behold I have obtained a land of promise" (spoken by Lehi while in the wilderness Valley of Lemuel before they left on their journey, 1 Nephi 5:5); "After [Christ] was baptized with water, the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove" (spoken by Nephi approximately 550 years before Christ's birth, 2 Nephi 31:8); "These are they whose sins [Christ] has borne; these are they for whom he has died, to redeem them from their transgressions" (spoken by Abinadi approximately 150 years before Christ's birth, Mosiah 15:12).

Angela Crowell noted the following in her article entitled "Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon":

The Prophetic Perfect is a common usage in the language of the prophets. The prophet so transports his mind ahead that he describes a future event as if it had been already seen or heard by him. This happens in making promises or threats, and also in the language of contracts.^{xiv}

(Allen H. Richardson, David E. Richardson, and Anthony E. Bentley, *Voice from the Dust-500 Evidences Supporting the Book of Mormon*, p. 268.)

2 Nephi 31:8 In the Form of a Dove:

Andrew Skinner writes that when speaking of the dove as an identifying symbol of the Holy Ghost, Joseph Smith said, "The sign of the dove was instituted before the creation of the world, a witness for the Holy Ghost, and the devil cannot come in the sign of a dove."

The implication of this statement is that other signs, symbols, and tokens were also instituted in premortality to represent deity, but the one that Satan absolutely could not imitate was the dove. However, as the preeminent counterfeiter and deceiver, Satan could and *does* usurp these other signs and symbols properly reserved for God in order to try to legitimize his false identity as a god. This is why Satan chose to use the sign of the serpent as the best means of deceiving Eve as well as her posterity from that moment on.

The serpent first appears in the scriptures in the story of the fall of Adam and Eve (see Genesis 3:1). In the Hebrew language the creature is called a *nahash*, a viper, from which derives the noun for copper or brass (*nehosheth*), also used as an adjective denoting the "brass" serpent

that Moses erected on a pole in the wilderness for the protection and healing of the Israelites (see Numbers 21:4-9).

On the one hand, the *nahash* in Genesis is clearly symbolic of evil, even the evil *one* (Satan), precisely because the serpent was in league with the devil, promoting the cause of the adversary and acting as his agent to bring about the fall (see Moses 4:5-31). On the other hand, when used by Moses under God's inspiration, the image of the *nahash* or, more precisely, the *nahash nehosheth* (brass serpent), became the agent of life and salvation for God's covenant people.

When Moses and Aaron went before the pharaoh they did exactly as the Lord had commanded. Their staff became a snake, which in the Hebrew text is denoted by two different terms, one of which is the very same word used earlier in Genesis to describe Eve's tempter, *nahash* (see Exodus 7:9, 10, 15). Either through sleight of hand, or by demonic power, Pharaoh's magicians were able to duplicate the action and turn their staffs into serpents as well. In what might be viewed as a quintessential showdown between God and the devil, the serpent of Jehovah swallowed up the serpents of Pharaoh as the God of Israel demonstrated his omnipotent supremacy (see Exodus 7:10-13). This scene dramatically illustrates the duality of serpent imagery in the scriptures.

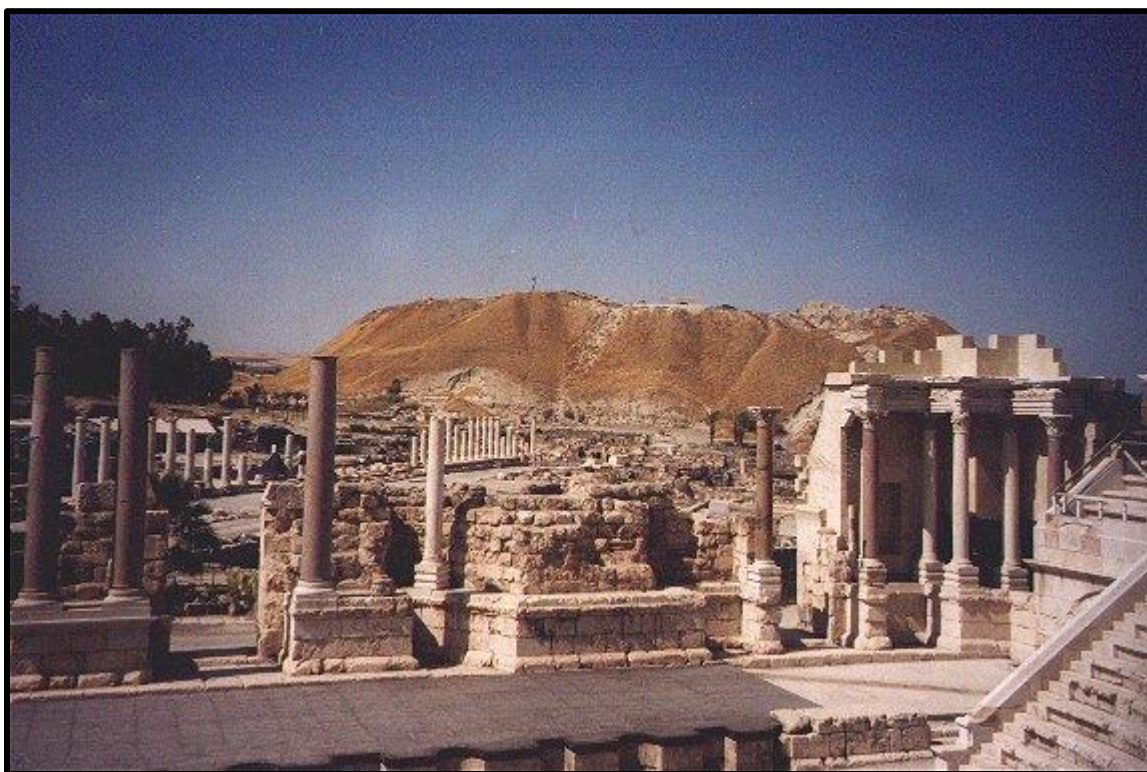
It seems quite plausible that like the sign of the dove, the sign of the serpent was instituted in premortality as a symbol of deity, particularly of Jehovah (see Exodus 4:1-5; 7:10-13; and Numbers 21:5-9) and later on as a symbol of Jehovah-come-to-earth, or in other words Jesus Christ (see John 3:14-15), the true God of life and salvation. It also seems plausible that both the signs of the dove and the serpent (as specific symbols of the true and living Lord) were made known to God's children in mortality sometime in the distant past. It is interesting to note that at the archaeological site in the Holy Land where most of the cultic objects bearing serpent imagery have been found (Beth-shan), the serpents are usually displayed in association with doves.



Location of Beth-shan

shalomil.com

In addition to the smaller religious objects that display the serpent-dove motif, each of the two Iron Age I temples at Beth-shan display the serpent-dove decoration.



Ruins of Beth-shan

hudsonfla.com

A fragment of the relief from the southern temple depicts deities standing and holding doves, while serpents wind upward with their heads almost touching the feet of the deities. In the northern temple, doves sit near the feet of deities as serpents glide towards the doves.

Over time the symbolic importance of the dove seems to have been lost altogether, while the symbol of the serpent was usurped by Satan, and then, over time, its true meaning became corrupted and diffused through many cultures over the ages. However, enough faint glimpses and echoes of its original and intended association with Christ exist to enable us to make significant connection to the truth as we engage in cross-cultural and historical studies.

([Andrew C. Skinner, "Savior, Satan, and Serpent," in *The Disciple As Scholar: Essays on Scripture and the Ancient World in Honor of Richard Lloyd Anderson*, p. 371, 373, 380-82.]

2 Nephi 31:11 **And the Father Said:**

Joseph McConkie and Robert Millett write:

2 Nephi 31 is a most distinctive scriptural text. In verse 11 Nephi records the words of the Father to him. In verse 12 the voice of the Son comes to him. The pattern repeats itself in reverse order in verses 14 and 15--- in verse 14 we have a record of that spoken by the voice of the Son, verse 15 the voice of the Father. Apparently Nephi finds himself in conversation with both members of the Godhead. If such is the case, this is a singular occasion, inasmuch as revelation since the Fall has normally come by and through Jehovah, who is Jesus Christ. The prophet Enoch seems to have had an experience similar to Nephi's (see Moses 7:50, 53, 59)."

(Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon, vol. 1, p. 364.)

2Nephi 31:13 **The Baptism of Fire:**

Bruce R. McConkie writes:

The baptism of the Spirit is called the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost...By the power of the Holy Ghost -- who is the Sanctifier (3 Ne. 27:19-21) -- dross iniquity, carnality, sensuality, and every evil thing is burned out of the repentant soul as if by fire; the cleansed person becomes literally a new creature of the Holy Ghost. (Mosiah 27:24-26.) He is born again.

The baptism of fire is not something in addition to the receipt of the Holy Ghost; rather, it is the actual enjoyment of the gift which is offered by the laying on of hands at the time of baptism. 'Remission of sins,' the Lord says, comes 'by baptism and by fire, yea, even the Holy Ghost. (D. & C. 19:31; 2 Ne. 31:17.) (Mormon Doctrine, p. 73)

Joseph Smith writes: "Baptism by water is but half a baptism, and is good for nothing without the other half—that is, the baptism of the Holy Ghost." (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 366.)

2 Nephi 31:16 **Unless a Man Shall Endure to the End . . . He Cannot Be Saved:**

Dennis Largey notes that, historically, Christians have supported divergent views of the doctrine of perseverance, or endurance to the end. . . . which necessarily includes a discussion of the influence of and the balance between God's grace and man's works . . . Joseph Smith concluded that "the teachers of religion of the different sects understood the same passages of scripture so differently as to destroy all confidence in settling the question by an appeal to the Bible" (Joseph Smith-History 1:12).

However, the doctrine taught in the Book of Mormon about enduring to the end is clear: "Unless a man shall endure to the end, in following the example of the Son of the living God, he cannot be saved" (2 Nephi 31:16). . . .

The doctrine of endurance to the end is taught twenty-two times in the Book of Mormon in teachings by Christ, an angel, and seven prophets. The doctrine spans the entire Book of Mormon time period and probably was taught in the plates of brass as well. The requirement of endurance to the end appears consistently in context with the first principles and ordinances of the gospel. One could easily make the case that the Book of Mormon teaches that there are five first principles and ordinances of the gospel, the fifth being enduring to the end.

(Dennis L. Largey, "Enduring to the End," in *Doctrines of the Book of Mormon: The 1991 Sperry Symposium*, p. 57-59.)

2 Nephi 31:21 This Is the Way [Christ]; and There Is None Other Way Nor Name Given:

Why was Jesus uniquely qualified to be the Savior? Why is there "none other way nor name given" (2 Nephi 31:210)?

According to Jeffrey Marsh:

First, he alone was uniquely obedient to the way of our Father in Heaven (Hebrews 4:15; 9:14; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 1:19; Mosiah 15:5; D&C 20:22)

Second, he was foreordained, chosen from the beginning (1 Peter 1:20; Revelation 13:8; Ether 3:14; Moses 4:2; Abraham 3:27)

Third, as the Only Begotten Son of God, he inherited God's power over death (John 10:17-18; 2 Nephi 2:8; Mormon 7:5) He could lay down his life and take it up again. No one else has had power to do that.

Fourth, his atonement is universal. It affects all mankind (2 Nephi 9:7) and all of the Father's creations (D&C 76:40-43).

(W. Jeffrey Marsh, *His Final Hours*, p. 13.) [See Mosiah 3:17; Alma 38:9; Helaman 5:9; Moroni 7:32]

2 Nephi 31:21 The Only True Doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Which Is One God Without End:

Barry Bickmore writes that the Bible contains four propositions about God that every Christian denomination must reckon with in its theology.

(1) First, is that the Bible contains several strongly monotheistic statements. When Moses says, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord" (Deuteronomy 6:4), he means, as the Muslims say, "There is no God but God." This view also finds support in God's statement to Isaiah that, "I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me." (Isaiah 43:10) This tradition is continued in the New Testament as, for example, when Jesus prayed to the Father he said, "And this is life eternal: that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent." (John 17:3)

(2) Second, there is a person called the Father, who is identified as God. The example of Christ's "high-priestly prayer," quoted in part above, should be ample evidence of this fact.

(3) Third, there is a person called the Son in the New Testament, namely Jesus Christ, who is called God. Clearly identifying Jesus as "the Word," John wrote, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1) Here Jesus is presented as God, but also as distinct from the Father, hence the phrase, "and the Word was with God." There are numerous other examples of this throughout the New Testament.

(4) Fourth, there is a person called the Holy Spirit who is identified as God. That the Holy Spirit is God is shown by Peter's accusation of Ananias, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost" . . . Thou has not lied unto men, but unto God." (Acts 5:3-4) The New Testament also teaches that the Holy Spirit is a person, distinct from the Father and Son: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John 14:26; see also Acts 13:2)

Naturally, these propositions present a problem. Are there three Gods or one? For Latter-day Saints, it is acceptable to say both that there is one God, and that there is a plurality of Gods, depending on the context. Quoting Joseph Smith, "I have always declared [that] . . . these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods." (Joseph Smith, in TPJS 370). Yet in the Book of Mormon, the prophet Nephi preached the way to salvation, or "doctrine of Christ" was the "only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end." (2 Nephi 31:211) What is the nature of this "oneness"? In Jesus' great Intercessory Prayer (see John 17), He asked that His disciples would be made one in Him as He was one in the Father.

(Barry Robert Bickmore, *Restoring the Ancient Church: Joseph Smith & Early Christianity*, p. 77-78.)

Chapter 32

2 Nephi 32:2 **Ye Could Speak With the Tongue of Angels**

(See KnowWhy #60 What is it to Speak with the Tongue of Angels?

www.bookofmormoncentral.org)

2 Nephi 32:3 **Angels Speak by the Power of the Holy Ghost:**



ibelievpodcast.com

2 Nephi 32:3-4 Feast upon the Words of Christ . . . If Ye Cannot Understand Them It Will Be Because Ye Ask Not, Neither Do Ye Knock . . . the Holy Ghost . . . Will Show unto You All Things What Ye Should Do:

The scriptures were not given to us for an occasional perusal, a casual reading, or a brief history lesson. They were given for us to “feast” on the words of Christ. This implies something much more than just reading. It implies that the scriptures are satisfying a powerful spiritual hunger and quenching a thirst for the things of the Spirit. Those who most enjoy this “feast” are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. The promise is given to them that they will be filled with the Holy Ghost (3 Ne 12:8). This occurs most of the time as the individual feasts upon the words of Christ in the scriptures. The spiritual food is internalized and becomes a part of the individual. Spiritually speaking, “you are what you eat.”

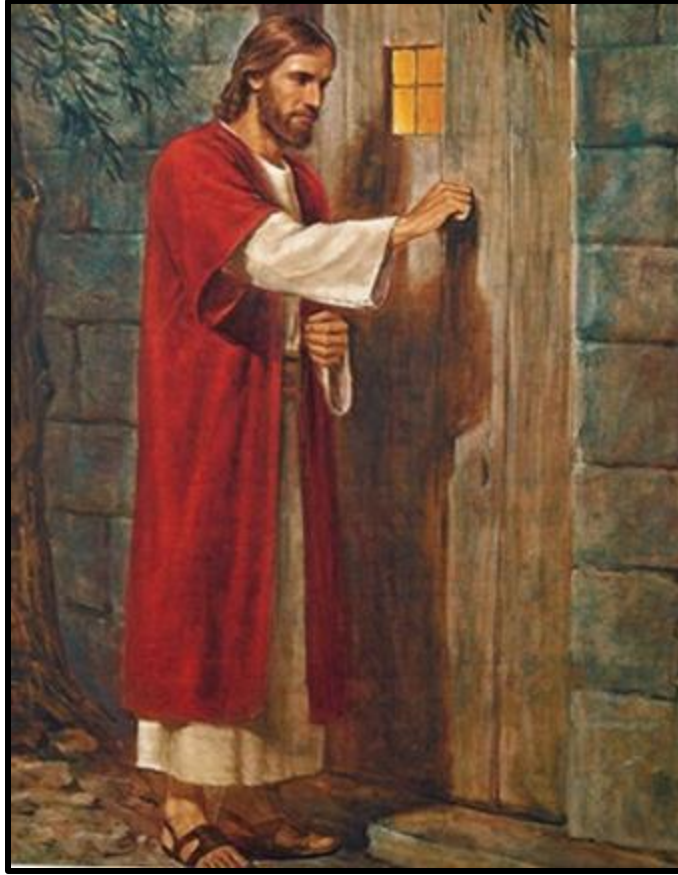
The other verb that the scriptures use to describe our approach to scripture study is “to search.” Scriptures are of little value unless they are feasted upon and searched. They are useful if they are “read,” but the term “search” implies something totally different. To “search” is to try to understand, to look for personal meaning, to understand historical context, to reference other sources, to find resolution to conflicts, and to internalize principles. The Lord has never commanded the saints to “read” the scriptures; He always commands them to “search” them: search them diligently that ye may profit (Mosiah 1:7)....and search these things diligently, for great are the words of Isaiah (3Ne 23:1).

[\[josephsmith.com.2Nephi\]](http://josephsmith.com.2Nephi)

Note* Nephi's words (or Christ's words) here allude to the teachings that Christ himself would leave with his disciples during his life here on earth. As recorded in Matthew 7:7: "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you."

While some might feel that these three phrases are a repetition of the same idea, I have come to view them as a process. That is, in order for me to gain an answer from the Lord, I have found that I must first ask the question. After asking the question, the next step for me is to "seek," or "search." I have found that the Lord is not going to do anything for me that I can do for myself. The last step is to "knock." After "seeking" and "searching," and still not coming up with an answer, we can "knock" at the "Door of Heaven" through prayer. I have found that when the Lord feels that the time is right, and that we have put forth the proper effort, He will grant us that knowledge. He is our covenant Lord, and He has said that all He has He will give to us if we will repent and be obedient (which I also consider to be a continual process).

(Alan Miner, Personal Notes)



Knock and it shall be opened unto you zazzle.com

2 Nephi 32:7 The Spirit Stoppeth Mine Utterance, and I Am Left to Mourn.

Nephi writes:

"Behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and there will be no more doctrine given until after he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh . . . When he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh, the things which he shall say unto you ye shall observe to do. And now I, Nephi, cannot say more."

Why can't Nephi (or Christ) say more? Nephi (and Christ) explain:

"The spirit stoppeth mine utterance, and I am left to mourn because of the unbelief and the ignorance and the stiffneckedness of men, for they will not search knowledge nor understand great knowledge when it is given unto them in plainness, even as plain as word can be." (2 Nephi 32:7)

2 Nephi 32:8-9 **The Spirit . . . Teacheth a Man to Pray . . Ye Must Pray Always:**

The Lord has instructed us not only in the method of prayer (to pray to the Father in the name of Christ) but to pray regarding every endeavor in which we perform any thing unto the Lord. Amulek also taught us what we should pray about: (note the structured repetition)

‘Therefore may God grant unto you, my brethren,

that ye may begin to exercise your faith unto repentance,
that ye begin to call upon his holy name,
that he would have mercy upon you;

Yea, **cry** unto him for mercy; for he is mighty to save.

Yea, humble yourselves, and continue in prayer unto him.

Cry unto him when ye are in your fields,
yea, over all your flocks.
Cry unto him _____ in your houses,
yea, over all your household, both morning,
mid-day,
and evening.

Yea, **cry** unto him against the power of your enemies.

Yea, **cry** unto him against the devil, who is an enemy to all righteousness.

Cry unto him over the crops of your fields, that ye may prosper in them.

Cry over the flocks of your fields, that they may increase.

But this is not all; ye must pour out your souls in your closets,
and your secret places,
and in your wilderness.

Yea, and when you **do not cry** unto the Lord,

let your hearts be full,

drawn out in prayer unto him continually

for your welfare,

and also for the welfare of those who are around you.’

(Alma 34:17-27)

Note* See the full structure of the above in *A Covenant Record of Christs People*, Volume 4b.

Chapter 33

2 Nephi 33:1 **Neither Am I Mighty in Writing, Like unto Speaking:**

Nephi's comment here is a product of his humility and is reminiscent of the words of Moroni: "Lord, the Gentiles will mock at these things, because of our weakness in writing; for Lord thou hast made us mighty in word by faith, but thou hast not made us mighty in writing." (Ether 12:23).

As we come to the end of Nephi's record, it should be underscored that the mighty writings of Nephi contain almost every principle that will be dealt with in the rest of the Book of Mormon. In a sense, first and second Nephi are a condensed, "Readers Digest" version of the Book of Mormon. In the words of the Lord, the plates of Nephi...do throw greater views upon my gospel (D & C 10:45). Those familiar with the Spirit of the Lord will recognize the words of Nephi as the words of Christ: "if ye shall believe in Christ ye will believe in these words, for they are the words of Christ" (2 Nephi 33:10). Furthermore, Nephi understood that the Lord was capable of making weak things become strong (Ether 12:27), for he said, the words which I have written in weakness will be make strong unto them (2 Ne 33: 4). Thus, the words of Nephi are mighty—they carry the Spirit of the Lord, they teach of Christ, they speak as the voice of one crying from the dust (2 Ne 33:13), and will be used to judge us at the bar of the great Jehovah (2 Ne 33:15).

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2 Nephi 33:4 **[Nephi's Words] Speaketh of Jesus, and Persuadeth Them to Believe in Him:**

According to Dean Garrett, Nephi wrote to communicate with the heart and the spirit of man, and persuaded his readers "to do good; [because his words] maketh known unto them of their fathers; and it speaketh of Jesus, and persuadeth them to believe in him, and to endure to the end, which is life eternal" (2 Nephi 33:4). Those who read Nephi's writings need to decide their effect: whether they encourage them to accept Christ and live a Christ-like life, or rather encourage them to do evil and reject Christ. No reader can miss the Christ-centered emphasis of Nephi's record. As George Q. Cannon concluded after having read the book for the first time, "An evil-minded man could not have written it, and a good man would not have tried to write it with intent to deceive" (Evans and Cannon 35).

(H. Dean Garrett, Nephi's Farewell," in *The Book of Mormon: Second Nephi, The Doctrinal Structure*, p. 379.)

2 Nephi 33:6 **I Glory in Plainness; I Glory in Truth; I Glory in My Jesus:**

Nephi wrote, "I glory in plainness; I glory in truth; I glory in my Jesus" (2 Nephi 33:6).

According to John Tvedtnes, this phrase contains an authentic parallelism (such as is found in typical biblical poetry), wherein the word "truth" parallels the name "Jesus," making them synonymous. In support of the idea that "truth" is one of the titles of Jesus, we note that he is called "the true Messiah" (2 Nephi 25:18), "the true vine" (1 Nephi 15:15), and "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). The Lord is also called the "God of truth" (Isaiah 65:16, where the Hebrew reads *elohe amen*; Ether 3:12 [referring to Jesus]).

Now in order to more fully understand the linking of the term "plainness" to "truth" and "Jesus," let us first turn to the Doctrine & Covenants. In D&C 93:24 we find the following definition of truth: "And truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come." In similar phrasing the Bible speaks of Jesus as he "which is, and which was, and which is to come" (Revelation 1:4, 8; 4:8; cf. John 1:1), thus defining him in the same manner as truth. Indeed, the title rendered in English as Jehovah means "he exists" and is the third person equivalent of the "I am" of Exodus 3:14 (cf. D&C 39:1). Thus it is with interest that we also find Jacob linking "Christ," "truth" and "plainness" with a "perfect knowledge" of "things as they really are, and of things as they will be":

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?

Behold, my brethren, he that prophesieth, let him prophesy to the 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. (Jacob 4:12-13)

(John Tvedtnes, "Faith and Truth," in *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, Fall 1994, p. 114-115.) [See the commentary on Alma 32:21]

2 Nephi 33:9 **And . . . and . . . and . . . and (Polysyndeton--The Excessive Use of the Conjunction "And"):**

Richardson, Richardson and Bentley note that the excessive use of the monotonous conjunction "and" in the Book of Mormon seems awkward and somewhat annoying to the western reader, however, it follows perfect Hebrew syntax. The word "and" often stands before each word (or phrase) in a series; possibly because there was no punctuation in the Hebrew language.

Notice the structure of 2 Nephi 33:9-10:

I also have charity for the Gentiles. But behold, for none of these can I hope except they shall be reconciled unto Christ,
and enter into the narrow gate,
and walk in the strait path which leads to life,
and continue in the path until the end of the day of probation.
And now, my beloved brethren,
and also Jew,

and all ye ends of the earth, hearken unto these words,
and believe in Christ;
and if ye believe not in these words believe in Christ.
And if ye shall believe in Christ ye will believe in these words, for they are the words of
Christ,
and he hath given them unto me;
and they teach all men that they should do good.
And if they are not the words of Christ, judge ye

Other uses of polysyndeton in the Book of Mormon are found in 1 Nephi 2:4; Enos 1:21; Alma 1:29; 7:27; 8:21-23; 9:21; Helaman 3:14; 3 Nephi 4:7; 11:19-20; 17:13-25; 4 Nephi 1:5-7; Mormon 8:37 ; Ether 9:17-27

(Allen H. Richardson, David E. Richardson and Anthony E. Bentley, *1000 Evidences for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: Part Two-A Voice from the Dust: 500 Evidences in Support of the Book of Mormon*, p. 262.)

2 Nephi 33:9 **Enter in to the Narrow Gate:**



Narrow Gate

tcwsf.blogspot.com

Christ is the Good Shepherd



Narrow Gate

xtiandefence.blogspot.com

Christ is the Rock of Salvation

2 Nephi 33:9 **Walk in the Strait Path Which Leads to Life:**



The Strait Path

mydailynewswatching.com

Christ is the WAY

2 Nephi 33:10 If Ye Shall Believe in Christ Ye Will Believe in These Words, For They Are the Words of Christ:

Joseph McConkie and Robert Millet write:

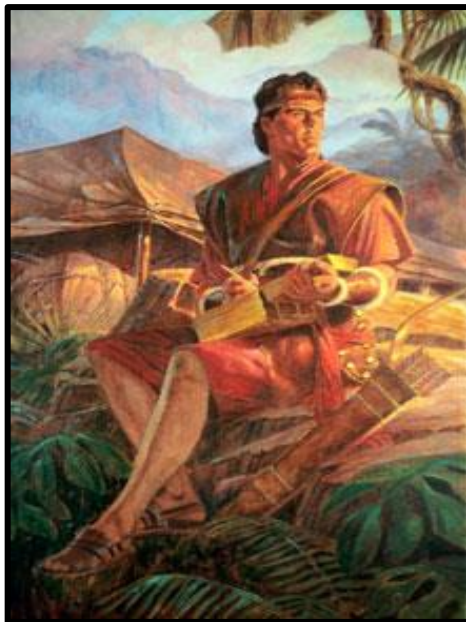
“The Book of Mormon is the most Christ-centered scriptural record ever published. Every doctrine within its covers is but an appendage to a central theme-- the testimony that Jesus is the Christ. All who believe in Christ will believe the words of this book. One cannot truly believe in the Bible and at the same time not believe in the Book of Mormon . . . To believe the words of one is to believe the words of both (see Mormon 7:9).”

(Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 1, p. 375.)

2 Nephi 33:14-15 For These Words Shall Condemn You at the Last Day, For What I Seal on Earth Shall Be Brought against You at the Judgment Bar:

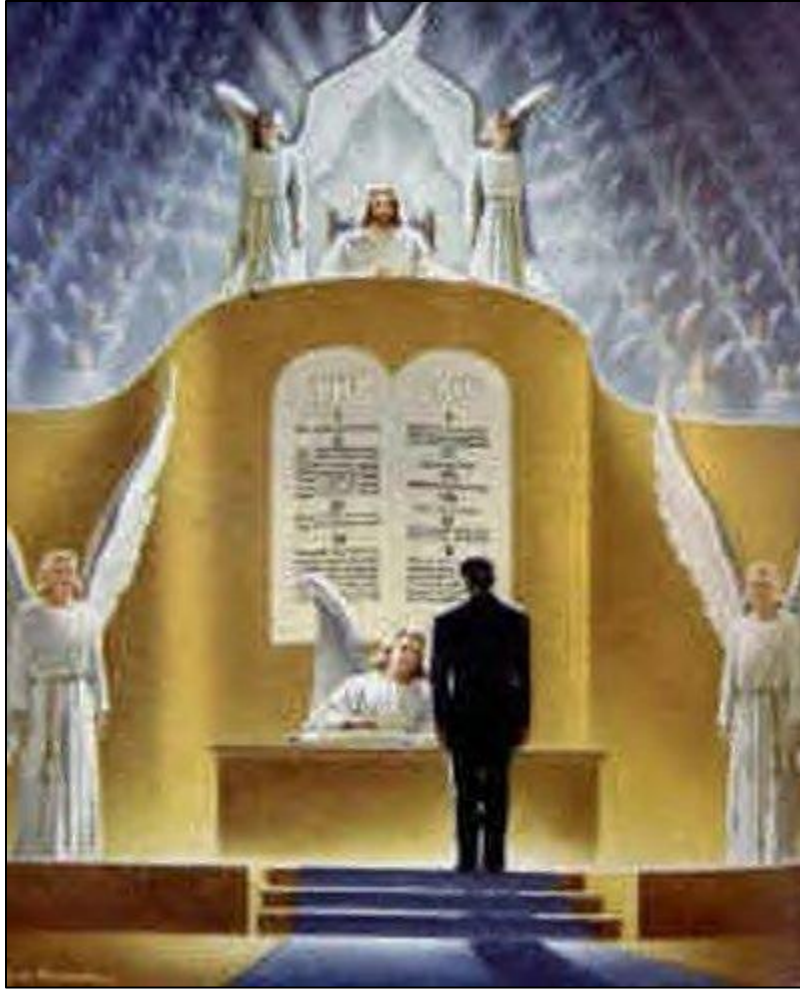
John the Revelator recorded, I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works (Rev 20:12). Nephi explains that the Book of Mormon is one of those books out of which the dead will be judged. If you have read the Book of Mormon, you will be held responsible for living by all the principles contained therein: “And the words which I have spoken shall stand as a testimony against you; for they are sufficient to teach any man the right way.” (2 Nephi 25:28).

[josephsmith.com.2Nephi]



Nephi seals up his writings

lds.org



These words shall condemn you

freedtracts.com

Notes

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- i. Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, May 1987, pp. 4-7.
- ii. There is a very important correlation between these references here and the 3 Nephi structure described in Chapter 12: "That which shall be --- according to that which hath been."
- iii. Lee I. Levine, "The Nature and Origin of the Palestinian Synagogue Reconsidered," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 115 (1996): 425-48.
- iv. Y. Aharoni, ed., *Beer-Sheba I* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1973). Plate 8 shows the bench around one of the gate chambers.
- v. William G. Dever, "Gezer," in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, ed. E. Stern (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993), 2:496-506. The photograph on page 503 shows the plan of the Solomonic gate, wherein each of the six gate chambers has benches.
- vi. Olga Tufnell, *Lachish III: The Iron Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953). Figure 4 on plate 15 shows a gate chamber with two tiers of benches and a niche in the wall.
- vii. Robert S. Lamon and Geoffrey M. Shipton, *Megiddo* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), 77. Figure 88 shows a gate chamber with benches.
- viii. In contrast to such centers for local activity of course, the temple was where priests and Levites performed sacrifices. On special occasions, such as the birth of a child or holy day, worshipers would leave their local town or city and travel to the temple to make their offerings.
- ix. The prophecy could also be called Nephi's "plain prophecy," but he uses "plain" again in 2 Nephi 31:2-3 to characterize his explanation of the doctrine of Christ in that chapter.
- x. The first edition of the Book of Mormon (1830), with topical chapters, generally longer than in the current editions, divides Nephi's "own prophecy" into just two: Chapter XI, equivalent to 2 Nephi 25-27, and Chapter XII, equivalent to 2 Nephi 28-30.
- xi. Nephi claims Isaiah-like words as his own in 2 Nephi 24:1-4, 7-8, 13, 20, 28; 26:14; 28:1, 6; 30:1, 3. He attributes Isaiah-like words to the Lord in ways that Isaiah does not in 2 Nephi 26:18; 27:28; 29:1.
- xii. Genesis 12:1-3, 7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-3; 18:1-33; 22:1-2, 11-18; 26:1-2, 24; 32:24-30; 35:9-15.
- xiii. Ronald Youngblood, *The Heart of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1971), 40-41.
- xiv. Angela Crowell, "Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon," *The Zarahemla Record*, (1982), p. 4. Crowell cites William Gesenius, *Hebrew Grammar*, edited by E. Kautzsch [Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1956], pp. 312-313.