

**Come Follow Me Lesson 37**  
**3 Nephi 8-11 Sep 14-20**

**3 Nephi 8**

The time of Christ's visit to the Nephites in America could have been as much as nine to twelve months after his ascension into heaven following his ministry among His disciples in the Old World. It may be that He waited for the Nephites to be physically ready for Him before His visit. He gave them time to fix their temple and repair their homes prior to His visit. His visit may coincide with the timing of the Feast of Tabernacles which was to celebrate the harvest. This may also be the timing of the Second Coming.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: The Nephites adjusted their calendar so as to begin a new dating era with the birth of Jesus; and according to their chronology, the storms and the darkness and the crucifixion came to pass on the fourth day of the first month of the thirty-fourth year. (3 Ne. 8.) Then "in the ending" of that year (3 Ne. 10:18-19), several months after the Ascension on Olivet, Jesus ministered personally among the Nephites for many hours on many days. He came as "a man descending out of heaven"; introduced himself as the God of Israel; permitted the multitude to feel the prints of the nails in his hands and feet and to thrust their hands into his side; called a quorum of twelve; gave them keys and powers and authorities; healed the Nephite sick and introduced the sacramental ordinance in the Western Hemisphere; taught the people in plainness and with an excellence surpassing much that was done in his Palestinian ministry; gave them the gift of the Holy Ghost; and ascended to his Father. The Mortal Messiah, 4: Chapter 113

*Tempests, earthquakes, fires, whirlwinds, and physical upheavals attest the crucifixion of Christ—Many people are destroyed—Darkness covers the land for three days—Those who remain bemoan their fate.*  
[A.D. 34]

1 AND now it came to pass that according to our record, and we know our record to be <sup>a</sup>true, for behold, it was a <sup>b</sup>just man who did keep the record—for he truly did <sup>c</sup>many <sup>d</sup>miracles in the <sup>e</sup>name of Jesus; and there was not any man who could do a miracle in the name of Jesus save he were cleansed every whit from his iniquity— (Hartman Rector Jr.: “The prophet Mormon stated very plainly what I like to call the qualification for the performance of miracles. It is recorded in 3 Nephi...‘there was not any man who could do a miracle in the name of Jesus save he were cleansed every whit from his iniquity.’ So this is the qualification: we must be cleansed every whit from our iniquity. When I first read this passage of scripture, I felt to say ‘Hurray for repentance!’ for if it were not for repentance, there would be no miracles performed.” (*Conference Report*, Apr. 1970, p. 103) Elder Charles A. Callis: “Isn’t this a clarion call to purity of life? The cleaner our lives, the purer our thoughts, the greater will be our power, by the prayer of faith, to heal those who are afflicted with bodily ills. It is the truth that the many mighty miracles that Jesus the Redeemer wrought was due to the fact that he lived so close to the Father, lived so perfectly the celestial laws of God, that unto him was given that superhuman power.” (*Conference Report*, Apr. 1924, p. 81))

2 And now it came to pass, if there was no mistake made by this man in the reckoning of our time, the <sup>a</sup>\*thirty and third year had passed away;

3 And the people began to look with great earnestness for the sign (Are we looking earnestly for the signs of Jesus’ Second Coming?) which had been given by the prophet Samuel, the Lamanite, yea, for the time that there should be <sup>a</sup>darkness for the space of three days over the face of the land.

4 And there began to be great <sup>a</sup>doubtings and <sup>b</sup>disputations among the people, notwithstanding so many signs had been given.

5 And it came to pass in the <sup>a</sup>\*thirty and fourth year, in the first month, on the fourth day of the month, (“The New Testament account of the crucifixion of Christ would seem to indicate that the Savior was

crucified the very week he became thirty-three years of age. The Book of Mormon not only substantiates this account, but also provides us with an exact date of the crucifixion. According to the Nephite calendar system, the Savior was crucified ‘in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, on the fourth day of the month.’ (3 Nephi 8:5.) Although we are not certain when the first month of the Nephite calendar would occur, if the Nephites were using the same calendar system as the Hebrews, the first month would be in the spring of the year sometime between about the middle of March and the middle of April.” (Daniel Ludlow, *A Companion To Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, p. 258-9) Orson Pratt: “We find that the ancient Israelites on this continent had a sign given of the exact time of the crucifixion and a revelation of the exact time of the Savior’s birth, and according to their reckoning, they made him thirty-three years and a little over three days old from the time of his birth to the time that he hung upon the cross.” (*Journal of Discourses*, 13:127) “It is generally believed and conceded by the learned, who have investigated the matter, that Christ was born in April. I have seen several accounts--some of them published in our periodicals--of learned men in different nations, in which it is stated that, according to the best of their judgment from the researches they have made, Christ was crucified on the 6th of April. That is, the day on which this church was organized.” (*Journal of Discourses*, 15:257) there arose a great <sup>b</sup>storm, such an one as never had been known in all the land. (Orson Pratt: For the Lord has said in this book, (the Book of Mormon) which has been published for thirty eight years, that if they will not repent He will throw down all their strongholds and cut off the cities of the land, and will execute vengeance and fury on the nation, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard. That He will send a desolating scourge on the land; that He will leave their cities desolate, without inhabitants. For instance the great, powerful and populous city of New York, that may be considered one of the greatest cities of the world, will in a few years become a mass of ruins. The people will wonder while gazing on the ruins that cost hundreds of millions to build, what has become of its inhabitants. Their houses will be there, but they will be left desolate. So saith the Lord God. That will be only a sample of numerous other towns and cities on the face of this continent. JD, 12:344)

6 And there was also a great and terrible tempest; and there was terrible <sup>a</sup>thunder, insomuch that it did <sup>b</sup>shake the whole earth as if it was about to divide asunder. (Hugh Nibley: “If you go into books on earthquakes and check this out, you’ll see that the order of the events is all very correct and accurate...The Book of Mormon just describes a No. 12 earthquake-No. 8 on the Richter Scale might do it. But the Assam earthquake in August 1950 was 12 on the scale. Remember, every time you go up a number, you double the strength of the earthquake, so you can imagine what a 12 would be if the last San Francisco earthquake was a 7.5 at the extreme. So this is some earthquake, and the order in which the events are described is very good here-all the things that should take place. So we’ve summed them up here in this very factual account (3 Ne 8). Well, it was a terror, about 11 or 12 on the Wood-Neuman scale. It is probably not the worst earthquake on record, because Assam was total destruction, and in this one we’re told there were some cities which remained. It was not total. It describes what happened at the epicenter. There were cities that remained; whereas, in the great Assam earthquake of 1950 the damage was total over a large area. I’m going to read you an account of that Assam earthquake...On August 15, 1950, there was an earthquake (in Tibet) that was total over 10,000 square miles and [killed] 500,000 people. Only 14 people survived. Imagine an earthquake [that killed] 500,000 people over that area. Well here’s a description of it. ‘On the morning of August 15, 1950, the day of the biggest and strangest earthquake in our times, it gave no inkling of what was to come.’ All of a sudden just this terrible storm and then the earthquake. All the seismographs in the world went mad...The energy unleashed was the equivalent of three million atom bombs...Stranger things were to follow. By all the rules the scene of the cataclysm should have been invaded by reporters, scientists, and relief workers. Nothing-it was just wiped out completely. Instead, they didn’t even have to bother. They were afraid of the Chinese going [in there]; that’s the Chinese border with Tibet. No worry after that-the map had completely changed. ‘Where there had been rivers before, there were mountains now. Rivers that ran in one direction now ran in the opposite direction.’” (*Teachings From the Book of Mormon*, Lecture 82, p. 316-7) Ezra Taft

Benson: "In the Book of Mormon we find a pattern for preparing for the Second Coming. A major portion of the book centers on the few decades just prior to Christ's coming to America. By careful study of that time period, we can determine why some were destroyed in the terrible judgments that preceded His coming and what brought others to stand at the temple in the land of Bountiful and thrust their hands into the wounds of His hands and feet." (Ensign, Nov. 1986, pp. 6-7 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 407) Spencer W. Kimball: "These tremendous convulsions of nature not only impressed the Nephites greatly so that they recorded them in their history, but the memory of them also stayed in the minds of the Lamanites, or the American Indians, for fifteen hundred years. Shortly after the discovery of America, the Catholic missionaries and explorers learned that the American Indians had a tradition of the great convulsions of nature that took place at the time of Christ's death. For example, I would like to quote from a Lamanite, an Indian prince named Ixtlilxochitl, who lived near the city of Mexico and wrote his book in 1600 A.D.: '...the sun and the moon eclipsed, and the earth trembled, and the rocks broke, and many other things and signs took place, . . . This happened . . . at the same time when Christ our Lord suffered, and they say it happened during the first days of the year.' (Works of Ixtlilxochitl, cited in Milton R. Hunter and Thomas Stuart Ferguson, *Ancient America and the Book of Mormon*. p. 190.)" (*Conference Report*, Apr. 1961, p. 50-51)) The destructions that occurred at Christ's death may be a type of what to expect at the Second Coming. Here is a list of similar events that occurred at Christ's death and those prophesied at the Second Coming:

NEPHITE DESTRUCTIONS	DESTRUCTIONS AT 2nd COMING
1) a great storm (v. 5)	An overflowing rain and great hailstones (Ezek 38:22)
2) terrible thunder (v. 6)	There were voices and thunderings and lightnings (Rev 8:5)
3) exceedingly sharp lightnings (v. 7)	Fierce and vivid lightning (D&C 87:6)
4) Zarahemla did take fire (v. 8)	I will send a fire on Magog (Ezek 39:6)
5) Moroni did sink into the depths of the sea (v. 9)	The waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds (D&C 88:90)
6) the whole face of the land was changed (v. 12)	Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low (Isa 40:4)
7) many...were slain (v. 15)	Seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them (Ezek 39:12)
8) some...were carried away in the whirlwind (v. 16)	The whirlwind shall take them away as stubble (Isa 40:24)
9) the rocks were rent in twain (v. 18)	The voice...shall break down the mountains (D&C 133:22)
10) there was darkness upon the face of the land (v. 19)	The sun shall be darkened (D&C 29:14)
11) the inhabitants...could feel the vapor (v. 20)	Blood and fire, and vapors of smoke (D&C 45:41)
12) they were heard to cry and mourn (v. 25)	There shall be weeping and wailing among the hosts of men (D&C 29:15)

(When the storms come, stand in holy places. Elder Lance B. Wickman: "Climbing atop the Mount of Olives with his disciples, the Savior prophesied the cataclysmic events that would precede the destruction of Jerusalem and his second coming. He then issued this portentous admonition to his disciples, ancient and modern: 'Then you shall stand in the holy place; whoso readeth let him

understand' (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:12; italics added; see also Matthew 24:15). Latter-day revelations provide understanding. They teach that in our day, amidst strife and catastrophe and pestilence, there are two kingdoms locked in grim struggle for the souls of men—Zion and Babylon. More than once they repeat the injunction to 'stand in holy places' for a refuge from these storms of latter-day life (D&C 45:32; see also D&C 87:8; 101:16–23). Prominent among such holy places, and key to all the others, is the temple of the Lord" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 110; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 82–83.).

7 And there were exceedingly sharp lightnings, such as never had been known in all the land.

8 And the <sup>a</sup>city of Zarahemla did take fire.

9 And the city of <sup>a</sup>Moroni did <sup>b</sup>sink into the depths of the sea, and the inhabitants thereof were drowned.

10 And the earth was carried up upon the city of <sup>a</sup>Moronihah, that in the place of the city there became a great <sup>b</sup>mountain.

11 And there was a great and terrible destruction in the land southward.

12 But behold, there was a more great and terrible destruction in the land northward; for behold, the <sup>a</sup>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;

13 And the <sup>a</sup>highways were broken up, and the level roads were spoiled, and many smooth places became rough.

14 And many <sup>a</sup>great and notable cities were <sup>b</sup>sunk, and many were <sup>c</sup>burned, and many were shaken till the buildings thereof had fallen to the earth, and the inhabitants thereof were slain, and the places were left desolate.

15 And there were some cities which remained; but the damage thereof was exceedingly great, and there were many in them who were slain.

16 And there were some who were carried away in the <sup>a</sup>whirlwind; and whither they went no man knoweth, save they know that they were carried away.

17 And thus the face of the whole earth became deformed, because of the tempests, and the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the quaking of the earth.

18 And behold, the rocks were rent in twain; they were broken up upon the face of the whole earth, insomuch that they were <sup>a</sup>found in broken fragments, and in seams and in cracks, upon all the face of the land. (These scenes are of value to us, not alone because they detail the events on the American continent some two millennia ago but also because they typify what lies ahead. A study of 3 and 4 Nephi is of inestimable worth in our coming to understand how to prepare for the second coming of the Son of Man, and also what life will be like during the Millennium. DCBM, 4:36)

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 <sup>a</sup>three <sup>b</sup>hours; (This time frame may have coincided with the final three hours of the Savior on the cross prior to His death.) 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 <sup>c</sup>darkness upon the face of the land. (The time of the commencement of the darkness may coincide with the Savior's death. And the lifting of the darkness may coincide with the Savior's resurrection. Christ hung upon the cross for a period of about six hours, from approximately 9:00 AM until 3:00 PM. It was during the last three hours that darkness covered the land, as apparently the agonies of Gethsemane returned. Of this period Elder Bruce R. McConkie writes: He will continue to suffer the curses of crucifixion for another three hours, until around 3:00 PM when he voluntarily gives up the ghost. Of these coming hours, Matthew and Mark say only that it was a period when there was darkness over all the land; Luke extends this turning of day into night over a greater area. There was a darkness over all the earth, he says, and the sun was darkened. The fact of the darkness, for which there is no known scientific explanation, is known to us, but its purpose and what happened during those three seemingly endless hours remain outside the

bounds of our understanding. Could it be that this was the period of his greatest trial, or that during it the agonies of Gethsemane recurred and even intensified? That this darkness did cover the whole earth we surmise from the Book of Mormon account. The Nephite prophets had spoken Messianically, of three days of darkness that would be a sign unto them of the crucifixion of Christ. At that time the rocks would rend and there would be such upheavals in nature that those on the isles of the sea would say, the God of nature suffers. The Nephite records tells of the fulfillment of these prophecies; of the darkness and storms and destructions that then occurred; of cities sinking into the seas, of mountains and valleys being created; of the rocks rending and the whole face of the earth being deformed. It is of more than passing import that the storms and tempests and earthquakes lasted for the about the space of three hours, and then there was darkness upon the face of the land." Mortal Messiah 4:224-25, DCBM, 4:37-38)

20 And it came to pass that there was thick darkness upon all the face of the land, insomuch that the inhabitants thereof who had not fallen could <sup>a</sup>feel the <sup>b</sup>vapor of darkness;

21 And there could be no light, because of the darkness, neither candles, neither torches; neither could there be fire kindled with their fine and exceedingly dry wood, so that there could not be any light at all;  
22 And there was not any light seen, neither fire, nor glimmer, neither the sun, nor the moon, nor the stars, for so great were the mists of darkness which were upon the face of the land. (Hugh Nibley: "This, like much else in the account (e.g., that God 'did send down fire and destroy them,' 3 Nephi 9:11), suggests nearby volcanic activity. And indeed, in many cases earthquakes are the preparation for the volcano that follows, as in the Chilean 1960 quake, which triggered the activity of long-dormant volcanoes in the area. Most of the victims of the great catastrophes of Pompeii, St. Pierre (Martinique, 1902), and Mt. Pelee (1906) died of suffocation when earthquake dust, volcanic ash, steam, and hot gasses (mostly sulfureted hydrogen gas) took the place of air. In some areas, the Book of Mormon reports, people were 'overpowered by the vapor of smoke and of darkness,' and so lost their lives (3 Nephi 10:13). Even without volcanic accompaniments, however, major earthquakes kick up a terrible dust and, according to Sieberg, are accompanied by phenomenal vapors and astonishingly thick air. In the Assam earthquake such contamination 'reduced [visibility] to a few feet and made breathing a nightmare.' According to 3 Nephi 8:20-21 the 'vapor of darkness' was not only tangible to the survivors, but defeated every attempt to light candles or torches for illumination. At present, intensive studies are being made of the destruction of the Greek island of Thera (today Santorini) in 1400 B.C. This catastrophe, well within historic times, is thought to have been eight times as violent as Krakatoa and is described in terms exactly paralleling the account in 3 Nephi. Among other things it is pointed out that the overpowering thickness of the air must have extinguished all lamps." (Since Cumorah, p. 236))

23 And it came to pass that it did last for the space of three days that there was no light seen; ("These three days of darkness obviously accord with the three days that the body of the crucified Christ lay in the borrowed tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea. How appropriate that the lands of the Book of Mormon be draped in darkness to commemorate the death and suffering of their king! The coming of light each morning ought be a reminder to all of the manner in which our Redeemer brought to an end that long night of darkness we associate with death and ought also be a reminder of the promise granted us, through him, of a newness of life." (McConkie, Millet, and Top, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 4, p. 39)) and there was great mourning and <sup>a</sup>howling and weeping among all the people continually; yea, great were the groanings of the people, because of the darkness and the great destruction which had come upon them.

24 And in one place they were heard to cry, saying: O that we had repented <sup>a</sup>before this great and terrible day, and then would our brethren have been spared, and they would not have been <sup>b</sup>burned in that great city Zarahemla.

25 And in another place they were heard to cry and mourn, saying: O that we had repented before this great and terrible day, and had not killed and stoned the prophets, and cast them out; then would our

mothers and our fair daughters, and our children have been spared, and not have been buried up in that great city <sup>a</sup>Moroniyah. And thus were the howlings of the people great and terrible.

### 3 Nephi 9

*In the darkness the voice of Christ proclaims the destruction of many people and cities for their wickedness—He also proclaims his divinity, announces that the law of Moses is fulfilled, and invites men to come unto him and be saved. [A.D. 34]*

1 AND it came to pass that there was a <sup>a</sup>voice heard among all the inhabitants of the earth, upon all the face of this land, crying:

2 Wo, wo, wo unto this people; wo unto the inhabitants of the whole earth except they shall <sup>a</sup>repent; for the devil <sup>b</sup>laugheth, and his angels rejoice, because of the slain of the fair sons and daughters of my people; and it is because of their iniquity and abominations that they are fallen!

3 Behold, that great city Zarahemla have I <sup>a</sup>burned with fire, and the inhabitants thereof. (Notice that it is Jesus who destroys these wicked cities.)

4 And behold, that great city Moroni have I caused to be <sup>a</sup>sunk in the depths of the sea, and the inhabitants thereof to be drowned.

5 And behold, that great city <sup>a</sup>Moroniyah have I covered with earth, and the inhabitants thereof, to hide their iniquities and their abominations from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints shall not come any more unto me against them.

6 And behold, the city of Gilgal have I caused to be sunk, and the inhabitants thereof to be buried up in the depths of the earth;

7 Yea, and the city of Onihah and the inhabitants thereof, and the city of Mocum and the inhabitants thereof, and the city of <sup>a</sup>Jerusalem and the inhabitants thereof; and <sup>b</sup>waters have I caused to come up in the stead thereof, to hide their wickedness and abominations from before my face, that the <sup>c</sup>blood of the prophets and the saints shall <sup>d</sup>not come up any more unto me against them.

8 And behold, the city of Gadiandi, and the city of Gadiomnah, and the city of Jacob, and the city of Gimjemno, all these have I caused to be sunk, and made <sup>a</sup>hills and valleys in the places thereof; and the inhabitants thereof have I <sup>b</sup>buried up in the depths of the earth, to hide their wickedness and abominations from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints should not come up any more unto me against them.

9 And behold, that great city Jacobugath, which was inhabited by the people of king Jacob, have I caused to be burned with fire because of their sins and their <sup>a</sup>wickedness, which was above all the wickedness of the whole earth, because of their <sup>b</sup>secret murders and combinations; for it was they that did <sup>c</sup>destroy the peace of my people and the government of the land; therefore I did cause them to be burned, to <sup>d</sup>destroy them from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints should not come up unto me any more against them.

10 And behold, the city of Laman, and the city of Josh, and the city of Gad, and the city of Kishkumen, have I caused to be burned with fire, and the inhabitants thereof, because of their wickedness in casting out the prophets, and stoning those whom I did send to declare unto them concerning their wickedness and their abominations. (It is significant to note the Lord's definition of the wicked whom he had caused to be destroyed. While he could have recited an extensive listing of their abominations, the Lord simply cited their rejection of the living prophets whom he had sent unto them to cry repentance. This phrase seems to be saying that most, if not all, of the wickedness of the world and individual iniquity could be averted through heeding the words of the Lord's living prophets. DCBM, 4:40)

11 And because they did cast them all out, that there were none righteous among them, I did send down <sup>a</sup>fire and destroy them, that their wickedness and abominations might be hid from before my <sup>b</sup>face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints whom I sent among them might not cry unto me <sup>c</sup>from the

ground against them.

12 And <sup>a</sup>many great destructions have I caused to come upon this land, and upon this people, because of their wickedness and their abominations.

13 O all ye that are <sup>a</sup>spared because ye were more <sup>b</sup>righteous than they, will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may <sup>c</sup>heal you? (Elder Boyd K. Packer spoke of this link between the sin-induced spiritual sicknesses and the physical body: ‘There is another part of us, not so tangible, but quite as real as our physical body. This intangible part of us is described as mind, emotion, intellect, temperament, and many other things. Very seldom is it described as spiritual. But there is a spirit in man; to ignore it is to ignore reality. There are spiritual disorders, too, and spiritual diseases that can cause intense suffering. The body and the spirit of man are bound together. Often, very often, when there are disorders, it is very difficult to tell which is which.’ (“That All May Be Edified,” pp. 63-64.) “The Savior’s statement to the remnant Nephites and Lamanites is not merely symbolic but also literal. Through faith in Him and repentance, sick, sin-ridden, souls are healed by the Great Physician as much so as bodies were in the cleansing of lepers. The Savior’s healing declaration, ‘Be thou clean’ (see Matthew 8:2-3), is a literal promise to the faithful and repentant. It may be that all of the miraculous healings performed by Jesus were but tangible symbols of the greatest healing that he alone could perform- the healing of sick spirits and the cleansing of sin- stained souls. ‘The greatest miracles I see today,’ declared President Harold B. Lee, ‘are not necessarily the healing of sick bodies, but the greatest miracles I see are the healing of sick souls, those who are sick in soul and spirit and are downhearted and distraught, on the verge of nervous breakdowns’ (CR, April 1973, p. 178).” (McConkie, Millet, and Top, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 4, pp. 40-1) Bruce R. McConkie: when we say that only the righteous shall abide the day; when we say that there shall be an entire separation between the righteous and the wicked in that day—we must take into account the fact that there are no perfect men. All men fall short of divine standards; none attain the high state of excellence manifest in the life of the Lord Jesus; even the most faithful saints commit sin and live in some degree after the manner of the world. But such worldly works as remain with the righteous shall be burned so that the saints themselves may be saved. The burning that destroys every corruptible thing is the same burning that cleanses the righteous. Evil and sin and dross will be burned out of their souls because they qualify to abide the day, even though all their works have not been as those of Enoch and Elijah. If only perfect people were saved, there would be only one saved soul—the Lord Jesus. Millennial Messiah, 543-544)

14 Yea, verily I say unto you, if ye will <sup>a</sup>come unto me ye shall have <sup>b</sup>eternal life. Behold, mine <sup>c</sup>arm of mercy is extended towards you, and whosoever will come, him will I receive; and blessed are those who come unto me. (Come, [Christ] says lovingly. Come, follow me. Wherever you are going, first come and see what I do, see where and how I spend my time. Learn of me, walk with me, talk with me, believe. Listen to me pray. In turn you will find answers to your own prayers. God will bring rest to your souls. Come, follow me. Jeffrey R. Holland, CR, Oct 1997, p. 88)

15 Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I <sup>a</sup>created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. (Under the direction of his Father, Jesus Christ created this earth. No doubt others helped him, but it was Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, who, under the direction of his Father, came down and organized matter and made this planet, so that it might be inhabited by the children of God. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:74.) I was with the Father from the beginning. <sup>b</sup>I am in the Father, and the Father in me; and in me hath the Father glorified his name.

16 I came unto my own, and my own <sup>a</sup>received me not. And the scriptures <sup>b</sup>concerning my coming are fulfilled.

17 And as many as have received me, to them have I <sup>a</sup>given to become the sons of God; and even so will I to as many as shall believe on my name, for behold, by me <sup>b</sup>redemption cometh, and <sup>c</sup>in me is the <sup>d</sup>law of Moses fulfilled. (J. Reuben Clark: “It is difficult for us today to realize the tremendous revolution involved in altering the ritualism of the Law of Moses into the humble and lowly concept of worship, not with the sacrificial blood of animals, but with this broken heart and contrite spirit of the

worshiper...[Animal sacrifice] was always a vicarious sacrifice, apparently with little actual sacrifice except for the value of the animal sacrificed, by the individuals themselves, to cancel the debit, so to speak, against their lives and living in the eyes of the Almighty One. The sinner seemingly, in general, took on no obligation and considered himself under no obligation to abandon his sins, but took on only the obligation to offer sacrifice therefore. But under the new covenant that came in with Christ, the sinner must offer the sacrifice out of his own life, not by offering the blood of some other creature; he must give up his sins, he must repent, he himself must make the sacrifice." (*Behold the Lamb of God*, pp. 107-9 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 406-7))

18 I am the <sup>a</sup>light and the life of the world. I am <sup>b</sup>Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. (Christ is not the author of salvation if that means the innovator of the plan of redemption, but rather he is the cause thereof; that is, salvation is possible because of his atoning sacrifice and that he is the leader in the cause of salvation. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 66)

19 And ye shall offer up unto me <sup>a</sup>no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings.

(Although the objective or instructional purpose of animal sacrifices and burnt offerings was now fulfilled in Christ, the Saints understand that as part of the restitution of all things, such sacrifices will be reinstated, at least for a season. DCBM, 4:44)

20 And ye shall offer for a <sup>a</sup>sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit. ("...in the scriptural usage a broken heart is a malleable, meltable, moveable heart, and a contrite spirit is an honest, acknowledging spirit that says, 'I am, in fact, dependent...' There is not self-deprecation here, only honesty: 'I need help.' And when that is acknowledged, help comes." (Truman Madsen, *The Radiant Life*, p. 113) Ezra Taft Benson: "Godly sorrow is a gift of the Spirit. It is a deep realization that our actions have offended our Father and our God. It is the sharp and keen awareness that our behavior caused the Savior, He who knew no sin, even the greatest of all, to endure agony and suffering. Our sins caused Him to bleed at every pore. This very real mental and spiritual anguish is what the scriptures refer to as having 'a broken heart and a contrite spirit.' (See 3 Ne. 9:20; Moro. 6:2; D&C 20:37, 59:8; Ps. 34:18; Ps. 51:17; Isa. 57:15.) Such a spirit is the absolute prerequisite for true repentance." (*Ensign*, Oct. 1989, p. 2) Neal A. Maxwell: "The real act of personal sacrifice is not now nor ever has been placing an animal on the altar. Instead, it is a willingness to put the animal that is in us upon the altar—then willingly watching it be consumed! Such is the 'sacrifice unto [the Lord of] a broken heart and a contrite spirit.' (3 Nephi 9:20.)" (*Meek and Lowly*, p. 94) Bruce C. Hafen: "When we accept the modern law of sacrifice through the two-way covenants of the Atonement, our willingness to give the Lord everything we have mirrors his willingness to give us everything he has—our broken heart for his broken heart. The combination of his sacrifice with ours in the miraculous chemistry of this mutual belonging then gives us the power 'to contend against all the opposition, tribulations, and afflictions which [we] will have to encounter in order to be heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus.'" (*Belonging Heart*, p. 157)

The practice of sacrifice that was fulfilled in Christ was one of rites and rituals, whereas the new practice commanded of the Lord involved inner attitudes that would bring about outward obedience to commandments and ordinances. Just as the sacrifice of animals were to symbolize the shedding of the blood of Christ and to focus the faith of the people on the Messiah, so must our obedience stemming from the sacrifice of a broken heart and contrite spirit be centered solely on Christ. What then is a broken heart and a contrite spirit that is to be our living sacrifice to the Lord? It is as Paul taught, a godly sorrow which worketh repentance to salvation. (2 Corinthians 7:10 For <sup>a</sup>godly <sup>b</sup>sorrow worketh <sup>c</sup>repentance to <sup>d</sup>salvation not to be repented of: but the <sup>e</sup>sorrow of the world worketh death.) It is much more than just a repentant attitude; it includes a recognition of total dependence upon the Lord for salvation and a willing submission to him and his laws. Lamoni's father characterized this sacrifice with his desire to come to know God when he declared, "I will give away all my sins to know thee." (Alma 22:18) Offering a sacrifice out of a broken heart and a contrite spirit requires giving away our sins

through faith in Christ, sincere and complete repentance, obedience to the Lord's commands, and pressing forward with a steadfastness in Christ. DCBM, 4:44-45.) And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I <sup>b</sup>baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost, (The Holy Ghost is a sanctifier whose divine commission is to burn dross and evil out of a human soul as though by fire, thus giving rise to the expression baptism of fire, which is the baptism of the Spirit. Forgiveness is assured when the contrite soul receives the Holy Spirit, because the Spirit will not dwell in an unclean tabernacle... It is the Holy Spirit of God that erases carnality and brings us to a state of righteousness. We become clean when we actually receive the fellowship and companionship of the Holy Ghost. It is then that sin and dross and evil are burned out of our souls as though by fire. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the baptism of fire. There have been miraculous occasions when visible flames enveloped penitent persons, but ordinarily the cleansing power of the Spirit simply dwells, unseen and unheralded, in the hearts of those who have made the Lord their friend. Bruce R. McConkie, New Witness, p. 239, 290.) even as the Lamanites, because of their faith in me at the time of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, ***and they knew it not.*** (Boyd K. Packer: Too many of us are like those whom the Lord said “[came] with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, ... [and] at the time of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, *and they knew it not.*” Imagine that: “And they knew it not.” It is not unusual for one to have received the gift and not really know it. I fear this supernal gift is being obscured by programs and activities and schedules and so many meetings. There are so many places to go, so many things to do in this noisy world. We can be too busy to pay attention to the promptings of the Spirit. The voice of the Spirit is a still, small voice—a voice that is *felt* rather than heard. It is a spiritual voice that comes into the mind as a thought put into your heart. CR, Apr 2000, 8 ‘Now, do not feel hesitant or ashamed if you do not know everything. Nephi said: ‘I know that he loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things.’ (1 Nephi 11:17.) There may be more power in your testimony than even you realize. The Lord said to the Nephites: ‘Whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost, even as the Lamanites, because of their faith in me at the time of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, *and they knew it not.*’ (3 Nephi 9:20; italics added.) Several years ago I met one of our sons in the mission field in a distant part of the world. He had been there for a year. His first question was this: ‘Dad, what can I do to grow spiritually? I have tried so hard to grow spiritually, and I just haven’t made any progress.’ That was his perception: to me it was otherwise. I could hardly believe the maturity, the spiritual growth that he had gained in just one year. He ‘knew it not,’ for it had come as growth, not as a startling spiritual experience.” (*That All May Be Edified*, p. 339) Ezra Taft Benson: “...we must be cautious as we discuss...remarkable examples [of conversion]. Though they are real and powerful, they are the exception more than the rule. For every Paul, for every Enos, and for every King Lamoni, there are hundreds and thousands of people who find the process of repentance much more subtle, much more imperceptible. Day by day they move closer to the Lord, little realizing they are building a godlike life. They live quiet lives of goodness, service, and commitment. They are like the Lamanites, who the Lord said ‘were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, *and they knew it not.*’ (3 Ne. 9:20; italics added.)” (*Ensign*, Oct. 1989, p. 2-6) True repentance is based on and flows from faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other way. Most repentance does not involve sensational or dramatic changes, but rather is a step by step, steady consistent movement toward godliness. We must be careful, as we seek to become more and more godlike, that we do not become discouraged and lose hope. Becoming Christlike is a lifetime pursuit and very often involves growth and change that is slow, almost imperceptible. The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, p. 71-72. Elder Douglas L. Callister: When the 23-year-old Heber J. Grant was installed as president of the Tooele Stake, he told the Saints he believed the gospel was true. President Joseph F. Smith, a counselor in the First Presidency, inquired, “Heber, you said you believe the gospel with all your heart, . . . but you did not bear your testimony that you know it is true. Don’t you know absolutely that this gospel is true?” Heber answered, “I do not.” Joseph F. Smith then turned to John Taylor, the President of the Church, and said, “I am in favor of

undoing this afternoon what we did this morning. I do not think any man should preside over a stake who has not a perfect and abiding knowledge of the divinity of this work." President Taylor replied, "Joseph, Joseph, Joseph, [Heber] knows it just as well as you do. The only thing that he does not know is that he does know it." Within a few weeks that testimony was realized, and young Heber J. Grant shed tears of gratitude for the perfect, abiding, and absolute testimony that came into his life. It is a grand thing to know—and to know that you know and that the light has not been borrowed from another. Oct 2007 General Conference)

21 Behold, I have come unto the world to bring <sup>a</sup>redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin.  
22 Therefore, whoso <sup>a</sup>repenteth and cometh unto me <sup>b</sup>as a <sup>c</sup>little child, him will I receive, for of such is the kingdom of God. Behold, for such I have <sup>d</sup>laid down my life, and have taken it up again; therefore repent, and come unto me ye ends of the earth, and be saved. (Even if we don't have dramatic spiritual experiences, we can still repent and come unto Christ.)

### 3 Nephi 10

The time of Christ's visit to the Nephites in America could have been as much as nine to twelve months after his ascension into heaven following his ministry among His disciples in the Old World. It may be that He waited for the Nephites to be physically ready for Him before His visit. He gave them time to fix their temple and repair their homes prior to His visit. His visit may coincide with the timing of the Feast of Tabernacles which was to celebrate the harvest. This may also be the timing of the Second Coming. Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: The Nephites adjusted their calendar so as to begin a new dating era with the birth of Jesus; and according to their chronology, the storms and the darkness and the crucifixion came to pass on the fourth day of the first month of the thirty-fourth year. (3 Ne. 8.) Then "in the ending" of that year (3 Ne. 10:18-19), several months after the Ascension on Olivet, Jesus ministered personally among the Nephites for many hours on many days. He came as "a man descending out of heaven"; introduced himself as the God of Israel; permitted the multitude to feel the prints of the nails in his hands and feet and to thrust their hands into his side; called a quorum of twelve; gave them keys and powers and authorities; healed the Nephite sick and introduced the sacramental ordinance in the Western Hemisphere; taught the people in plainness and with an excellence surpassing much that was done in his Palestinian ministry; gave them the gift of the Holy Ghost; and ascended to his Father. The Mortal Messiah, 4: Chapter 113

*There is silence in the land for many hours—The voice of Christ promises to gather his people as a hen gathereth her chickens—The more righteous part of the people had been preserved. [A.D. 34]*

1 AND now behold, it came to pass that all the people of the land did <sup>a</sup>hear these sayings, and did witness of it. And after these sayings there was silence in the land for the space of many hours;  
2 For so great was the astonishment of the people that they did cease lamenting and howling for the loss of their kindred which had been slain; therefore there was silence in all the land for the space of many hours.

3 And it came to pass that there came a voice again unto the people, and all the people did hear, and did witness of it, saying:

4 O ye people of these <sup>a</sup>great cities which have fallen, who are descendants of Jacob, yea, who are of the house of Israel, <sup>b</sup>how oft have I <sup>b</sup>gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and have <sup>c</sup>nourished you.

5 And again, how oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, yea, O <sup>a</sup>ye people of the house of Israel, who have fallen; yea, O ye people of the house of Israel, ye that dwell at Jerusalem, as ye that have fallen; yea, how oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens, and ye would not. (D&C 43:23-25: 23 And again, the Lord shall utter his voice out of heaven,

saying: Hearken, O ye nations of the earth, and hear the words of that God who <sup>a</sup>made you. 24 O, ye nations of the earth, how often would I have gathered you together as a <sup>a</sup>hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye <sup>b</sup>would not! 25 How oft have I <sup>a</sup>called upon you by the mouth of my <sup>b</sup>servants, and by the <sup>c</sup>ministering of angels, and by mine own voice, and by the voice of <sup>d</sup>thunderings, and by the voice of lightnings, and by the voice of tempests, and by the voice of earthquakes, and great hailstorms, and by the voice of famines and pestilences of every kind, and by the great sound of a <sup>f</sup>trump, and by the voice of judgment, and by the voice of <sup>g</sup>mercy all the day long, and by the voice of glory and honor and the <sup>h</sup>riches of eternal life, and would have saved you with an <sup>i</sup>everlasting salvation, but ye would not!)

6 O ye house of Israel whom I have <sup>a</sup>spared, how oft will I gather you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, if ye will repent and <sup>b</sup>return unto me with full purpose of <sup>c</sup>heart. (Joseph Smith: What was the object of gathering...the people of God in any age of the world?... The main object was to build unto the Lord a house whereby He could reveal unto His people the ordinances of His house and the glories of His kingdom, and teach the people the way of salvation...It is for the same purpose that God gathers together His people in the last days. Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 307-8. From the Book of Mormon Symposium Series: "The image of the hen calling after her chickens to come to the shelter and safety of her wings portrays the love of the Savior, his desire to nourish his children, to keep them safe from their common enemy, Satan, to shelter them from the storms of life, to give them the opportunity to grow and fulfill the promise of their nature. The image suggests other ideas as well. The chickens have strayed away from the hen. They have been lured from safety by their desire for adventure or rebellion, out into the tempting world where danger lurks beside every step. The hen calls to her chickens, but they must come of their own volition. They are not forced under her wings; they are invited, even urged, but they must exercise their own agency. In using this metaphor, the Lord designates his call to those of the fallen cities, who are descendants of Jacob, and to those of the house of Israel, who live at Jerusalem, establishing the right of the Savior to issue the call to repentance-they are his people who owe him obedience. And his use of the three verbs: 'how oft have I gathered you; ... how oft would I have gathered you; ... how oft will I gather you' emphasizes his timeless call to repentance-past, present, and future. The Savior's love is always there. His arms are always extended in mercy as long as there is any hope for his children to return to him. The true nature of repentance is not a test, not an indulgence, but a gift of love. It is one that we must take-it cannot be forced upon us." (Book of Mormon Symposium Series, 3 Ne 9-30, edited by PR Cheesman, MS Nyman, and CD Tate, Jr., 1988, p. 79))

7 But if not, O house of Israel, the places of your dwellings shall become <sup>a</sup>desolate (The First Presidency: "When Jesus was on the earth, he said to his people, 'How oft would I have gathered you, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not; therefore, behold, your house is left unto you desolate.' (Matt 23:37-8) And if the Saints of this dispensation do not listen to the call of the good Shepherd, and gather according to the holy commandment, the time is not far distant, when the representatives of the Saviour now on earth, may have occasion to say, as he said, 'Your house is left unto you desolate;' for plagues, famine, pestilence, and death are beginning to circumscribe the earth; and where will safety be but in Zion-the land of God's appointing-the home of the Saints; a land choice in products and government above all other lands; therefore, we say unto you, Arise and come forth, and tarry not, for the great day of the Lord is at hand, and who shall abide His coming?" (Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Willard Richards, James R. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, Apr. 1852, vol. 2, p. 99)) until the time of the fulfilling of the <sup>b</sup>covenant to your fathers.

8 And now it came to pass that after the people had heard these words, behold, they began to weep and howl <sup>a</sup>again because of the loss of their kindred and friends.

9 And it came to pass that thus did the three days pass away. And it was in the morning, (Orson Pratt: "Jesus was crucified and died on the cross at 3 o'clock in the afternoon at Jerusalem, and consequently for it to have been just three days and three nights, you might suppose that the darkness must have

dispersed in the afternoon. But this book tells us that when the three days and three nights of darkness had passed away it was morning. Now why this discrepancy--for it seems to be one--between the Bible and the Book of Mormon? Can you account for it, and tell why it should have been morning in America? ...Now you take a map of the world, and see the difference in longitude between the place where Jesus was crucified, and that where the writer of the Book of Mormon lived, and you will find that it is about seven and a half hours. Now you subtract seven and a half hours from 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and what time would it be when the three hours of quaking and the destruction of cities expired, or when the darkness commenced? Would it not be in the morning? Take away seven and a half hours longitude from 3 o'clock--the time that Jesus expired--and would it not be half past seven o'clock in the morning with the inhabitants of this land, while it was afternoon with the inhabitants in Jerusalem?" (*Journal of Discourses*, 15:259)) and the <sup>a</sup>darkness dispersed from off the face of the land, and the earth did cease to tremble, and the <sup>b</sup>rocks did cease to rend, and the dreadful groanings did cease, and all the tumultuous noises did pass away.

10 And the earth did cleave together again, that it stood; and the <sup>a</sup>mourning, and the weeping, and the wailing of the people who were spared alive did cease; and their mourning was turned into joy, and their lamentations into the <sup>b</sup>praise and thanksgiving unto the Lord Jesus Christ, their Redeemer. (This segment of the historical account also provides a glimpse or foreshadowing of the glory of the second coming of Christ, which likewise will bring an end to death and destruction and will replace mourning and lamentations with praises of thanksgiving and worship to the Lord Jesus Christ. DCBM, 4:48)

11 And thus far were the <sup>a</sup>scriptures <sup>b</sup>fulfilled which had been spoken by the prophets.

12 And it was the <sup>a</sup>more righteous part of the people who were saved, and it was they who received the prophets and stoned them not; and it was they who had not shed the blood of the saints, who were spared—

13 And they were spared and were not sunk and buried up in the earth; and they were not drowned in the depths of the sea; and they were not burned by fire, neither were they fallen upon and crushed to death; and they were not carried away in the whirlwind; neither were they overpowered by the vapor of smoke and of darkness.

14 And now, whoso readeth, let him understand; he that hath the scriptures, let him <sup>a</sup>search them, (L. Lionel Kendrick: "The Savior provided counsel as to the way we should study scripture. He said: 'And now, whoso readeth, let him understand; he that hath the scriptures, let him search them.' (3 Ne. 10:14.) The Prophet Joseph Smith counseled: 'Search the scriptures—search the revelations ... and ask your Heavenly Father, in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, to manifest the truth unto you, and if you do it with an eye single to His glory nothing doubting, He will answer you by the power of His Holy Spirit. You will then know for yourselves and not for another. You will not then be dependent on man for the knowledge of God; nor will there be any room for speculation.' (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 11-12.) "It is not enough to read the scriptures. Random reading results in reduced retention. We must search for specifics. We must seek for truth and increased understanding of its application in our lives. If we are to be effective in our study of the scriptures, we must prepare for it to be a special spiritual experience." (*Ensign*, May 1993, p. 13)) and see and behold if all these deaths and destructions by fire, and by smoke, and by <sup>b</sup>tempests, and by whirlwinds, and by the <sup>c</sup>opening of the earth to receive them, and all these things are not unto the fulfilling of the prophecies of many of the holy prophets.

15 Behold, I say unto you, Yea, many have testified of these things at the coming of Christ, and were <sup>a</sup>slain because they testified of these things. ("Up to the very moment when the terrible destruction began, the unbelievers were sure that the prophets had been wrong. They must have thought the prophets were negative, gloomy, and out of touch with reality. Then suddenly, in one great disastrous moment it became clear just how much in touch with reality the prophets had been. Unfortunately for tens of thousands of those who had previously scoffed, there was no time to reevaluate their skepticism. Is it that much different in our own day? We have been amply warned of the impending judgment, which will be every bit as terrible and devastating as that which occurred in AD 34. (See DC 29:14-21; 43:19-

25; 45:39-42; 88:87-91; 133:41-49) Yet the world at large either ignores such warnings or condescendingly views the prophets as religious fanatics who are out of touch with the real world. In the preface to the Doctrine and Covenants the Lord warned: ‘And the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, *shall be cut off from among the people*’ (D&C 1:14. Italics added.). Note also Mormon’s solemn words: ‘And now, whoso readeth, let him understand’ (v. 14).” (*Book of Mormon Student Manual*, 1981, p. 393))

16 Yea, the prophet <sup>a</sup>Zenos did testify of these things, and also Zenock spake <sup>b</sup>concerning these things, because they testified particularly concerning us, who are the remnant of their seed. (“The prophets Zenos and Zenock are quoted several times by the prophets of the Book of Mormon. A possible reason for this propensity in quoting them becomes evident in this reading assignment: the Nephites are descendants of the prophets Zenos and Zenock! The historian records: ‘... the prophet Zenos did testify of these things, and also Zenock spake concerning these things, because *they testified particularly concerning us, who are the remnant of their seed*’ (3 Nephi 10:16. Italics added.)” (Daniel Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, p. 260))

17 Behold, our father Jacob also testified concerning a <sup>a</sup>remnant of the seed of Joseph. And behold, are not we a remnant of the seed of Joseph? And these things which testify of us, are they not written upon the plates of brass which our father Lehi brought out of Jerusalem?

18 And it came to pass that in **the ending of the thirty and fourth year** (Bruce R. McConkie: “The Nephites adjusted their calendar so as to begin a new dating era with the birth of Jesus; and according to their chronology, the storms and the darkness and the crucifixion came to pass on the fourth day of the first month of the thirty-fourth year. (3 Ne. 8.) Then ‘in the ending’ of that year (3 Ne. 10:18-19), several months after the Ascension on Olivet, Jesus ministered personally among the Nephites for many hours on many days.” (*Mortal Messiah*, Book 4, p. 307) The signs of Christ’s death came on the fourth day of the first month in the thirty-fourth year. Mormon here tells us that Christ appeared to the Nephites in the ending of the thirty-fourth year, thus suggesting that it was several months following his Old World ascension into heaven before he came to the Nephites. DCBM, 4:50.) It is possible that the Savior visited the Nephites well before the end of the year as stated here. Bruce R. McConkie stated in Mormon Doctrine the following: The Book of Mormon record says “that soon after the ascension of Christ into heaven he did truly manifest himself unto” the Nephites. (3 Ne. 10:18; 11:12.) It would appear that from the manner in which Book of Mormon prophets speak of the ascension (Mosiah 18:2; Alma 40:20), that they have reference to his ascension immediately following his resurrection and not to that formal occasion 40 days after which later became known among Christian peoples as the ascension. Viewing the time differences between the old and new worlds, there would be no reason why he should not have ministered as a resurrected Being among the Nephites during the same interval in which he was continuing his resurrected walk with his followers in Jerusalem. MD, p. 55-55. Joseph Fielding Smith said: When Did Jesus Appear to the Nephites? Question: “Several years ago I was asked to make a talk on the events which took place on the American continent at the first Easter. In studying for the talk I discovered that it was almost a year from the time that Christ was crucified until he showed himself to the Nephite multitude at the temple in the land Bountiful. ‘And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, there arose a great storm,’ (3 Nephi 8:5.) ‘And it came to pass in the ending of the thirty and fourth year, behold, I will show unto you that the people of Nephi who were spared. . . .’ (*Ibid.*, 10:18.) “There is still a misconception of the event—or these events—in the minds of many of our members. Perhaps it doesn’t really matter. Will you please discuss it?” Answer: It is true that there has been a misconception in the minds of many members of the Church, but a careful reading of the account will clear up these misconceptions. It is true that a hasty examination will leave the impression that there was a delay of about a year after the resurrection of the Lord before he visited the Nephites and Lamanites who were spared; but more attention to what is written shows that it was but a very short time after his resurrection that the Lord appeared to the people who were assembled near the temple in

Bountiful. This false conclusion that practically a year had passed from the time of the resurrection until the Lord appeared on this hemisphere has been published and circulated throughout the Church. Therefore we are justified in asking our brethren and sisters, and all who read the Book of Mormon, to pay close attention to the details of the story. In 3 Nephi 8:5, we discovered that 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." The succeeding verses give much of the detail of the destruction which followed. This, evidently was at the time when Jesus was on the cross. Chapter 9 continues this story of destruction, and during this storm the voice of Jesus was heard in which he gave reasons for the great destruction, and he said: O all ye that are spared because ye were more righteous than they, will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you? . . . Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. I was with the Father from the beginning, I am in the Father, and the Father in me; and in me hath the Father glorified his name. (3 Nephi 9:13, 15.) All of this was while the great darkness covered the earth, and Mormon then through the ninth and tenth chapters commented upon the terrible destructions which had taken place. He closes the tenth chapter in these words: And it came to pass that in the ending of the thirty and fourth year, behold, I will show unto you that the people of Nephi who were spared, and also those who had been called Lamanites, who had been spared, did have great favors shown unto them, and great blessings poured out upon their heads, insomuch that *soon after the ascension of Christ into heaven* he did truly manifest himself unto them—Showing his body unto them, and ministering unto them; and an account of his ministry shall be given hereafter. Therefore for this time I make an end of my sayings. (3 Nephi 10:18-19; italics added.) Here he declares that it was soon after the Savior's ascension into heaven that he appeared to the Nephites and Lamanites on this continent. And his ascension was the day of his resurrection after his appearance to Mary at the tomb, and before his appearance to the disciples that same day. The reason why Mormon discontinued his account at this point is not stated. Evidently he was writing during the days of the great struggle with the Lamanites for the Nephite existence, and it is very possible that some sudden emergency had arisen so that he had temporarily to close his record. However, he continued his story where he broke off and states that there was a great multitude gathered together round about the temple in Bountiful. It seems perfectly clear that this great gathering was immediately after the close of the dreadful period of darkness. We read that the people were "marveling and wondering one with another," and "were showing one to another the great and marvelous change which had taken place." (3 Nephi 11:1.) While they were marveling and pointing out to each other these changes, and conversing, they heard a voice. . . . it was not a harsh voice, neither was it a loud voice; nevertheless, and notwithstanding it being a small voice it did pierce them that did hear to the center, insomuch that there was no part of their frame that it did not cause to quake; yea, it did pierce them to the very soul, and did cause their hearts to burn. (3 Nephi 11:3.) And it came to pass, as they understood they cast their eyes up again towards heaven; and behold, they saw a Man descending out of heaven; and he was clothed in a white robe; and he came down and stood in the midst of them; and the eyes of the whole multitude were turned upon him, and they durst not open their mouths, even one to another, for they thought it was an angel that had appeared unto them. (3 Nephi 11:8.) The fact that the multitude had gathered at the temple and were pointing out to each other the great changes that had occurred is evidence that this was an event immediately following the resurrection of our Lord. If this event had occurred one year later, the multitude would have been perfectly familiar with these great changes, and they would not have been so awed by them. It was in great astonishment and wonder that they had gathered and were pointing out to each other what had occurred. Moreover it is contrary to reason that Jesus would make the Nephites and Lamanites, who had been faithful, wait for one whole year before he would make his appearance and give them instruction in relation to the closing of the period in which the law of Moses was in force, and the period when the fulness of the gospel was ushered in. Answers to Gospel Questions, 4:25-29. We should say that we do not know for certain when Christ appeared to the Nephites, we just know that He did. Here is another

alternate view: What if the Savior's appearance to the Nephites occurred six months after his resurrection or in the fall of the year, say around the Feast of Tabernacles or Day of Atonement. If it occurred during that time period, that might also be a type and a shadow of when the Second Coming will occur.) behold, I will show unto you that the people of Nephi who were spared, and also those who had been called <sup>a</sup>Lamanites, who had been spared, did have great favors shown unto them, and great <sup>b</sup>blessings poured out upon their heads, insomuch that soon after the <sup>c</sup>ascension of Christ into heaven he did truly manifest himself unto them—

19 <sup>a</sup>Showing his body unto them, and ministering unto them; and an account of his ministry shall be given hereafter. Therefore for this time I make an end of my sayings.

### 3 Nephi 11

The time of Christ's visit to the Nephites in America could have been as much as nine to twelve months after his ascension into heaven following his ministry among His disciples in the Old World. It may be that He waited for the Nephites to be physically ready for Him before His visit. He gave them time to fix their temple and repair their homes prior to His visit. His visit may coincide with the timing of the Feast of Tabernacles which was to celebrate the harvest. This may also be the timing of the Second Coming. Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: The Nephites adjusted their calendar so as to begin a new dating era with the birth of Jesus; and according to their chronology, the storms and the darkness and the crucifixion came to pass on the fourth day of the first month of the thirty-fourth year. (3 Ne. 8.) Then "in the ending" of that year (3 Ne. 10:18-19), several months after the Ascension on Olivet, Jesus ministered personally among the Nephites for many hours on many days. He came as "a man descending out of heaven"; introduced himself as the God of Israel; permitted the multitude to feel the prints of the nails in his hands and feet and to thrust their hands into his side; called a quorum of twelve; gave them keys and powers and authorities; healed the Nephite sick and introduced the sacramental ordinance in the Western Hemisphere; taught the people in plainness and with an excellence surpassing much that was done in his Palestinian ministry; gave them the gift of the Holy Ghost; and ascended to his Father. The Mortal Messiah, 4: Chapter 113.

As students enter class, have music or a recorded speech playing very quietly. Stop the recording to have the opening prayer, and then ask students how many of them heard the recording. Discuss the following questions: • Did you pay attention to the music or speech? Why or why not? • What other sounds or noises did you focus on before class began? • Would it have been possible to listen to the music or speech? • What could have motivated you to pay special attention to it?

*Jesus Christ did show himself unto the people of Nephi, as the multitude were gathered together in the land Bountiful, and did minister unto them; and on this wise did he show himself unto them. Comprising chapters 11 to 26 inclusive.*

(This is the whole thing the Book of Mormon is coming toward, and afterward it all looks back to this. We have thirty pages of Christ's words here. That's more than you find in [any gospel] in the New Testament. I notice you have 28 pages in Matthew, 16 pages in Mark, 21 pages in Luke, and 24 pages in John. But in the Book of Mormon we have 30 pages of Christ's teachings. We have a better source for the teachings of Christ. Of course, he says I'm going to teach you what I taught them there. It parallels the New Testament quite closely, but very significantly it gives more. So Joseph Smith has written the fifth gospel here. What a horrendous burden for a mortal to take that on. How would he dare do that sort of thing? Hugh Nibley, Teachings of the Book of Mormon, 3:327)

*The Father testifies of his Beloved Son—Christ appears and proclaims his atonement—The people feel the wound marks in his hands and feet and side—They cry Hosanna—He sets forth the mode and manner of baptism—The spirit of contention is of the devil—Christ’s doctrine is that men should believe and be baptized and receive the Holy Ghost. [A.D. 34]*

1 AND now it came to pass that there were a great multitude <sup>a</sup>gathered together, of the people of Nephi, round about the temple which was in the land <sup>b</sup>Bountiful; and they were marveling and wondering one with another, and were showing one to another the <sup>c</sup>great and marvelous change which had taken place. 2 And they were also conversing about this Jesus Christ, of whom the <sup>a</sup>sign had been given concerning his death.

3 And it came to pass that while they were thus conversing one with another, they heard a <sup>a</sup>voice (God the Father’s voice) as if it came out of heaven; and they cast their eyes round about, for they understood not the voice which they heard; and it was not a harsh voice, neither was it a loud voice; nevertheless, and notwithstanding it being a <sup>b</sup>small voice it did <sup>c</sup>pierce them that did hear to the center, insomuch that there was no part of their frame that it did not cause to quake; yea, it did pierce them to the very soul, and did cause their hearts to burn. (Henry B. Eyring: “The still small voice is so quiet you won’t hear it when you’re noisy inside.” (*Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 409) “Now, I testify it is a small voice. It whispers not shouts. And so you must be very quiet inside. That is why you may wisely fast when you want to listen. And that is why you will listen best when you feel, ‘Father, thy will, not mine, be done.’ You will have a feeling of ‘I want what you want.’ Then, the still small voice will seem as if it pierces you. It may make your bones to quake. More often it will make your heart burn within which will lift and reassure.” (*Ensign*, May 1991, p. 67 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 409-10) Spencer W. Kimball: The burning bushes, the smoking mountains,... the Cumorahs, and the Kirtlands were realities; but they were the exceptions. The great volume of revelation came to Moses and to Joseph and comes to today’s prophet in the less spectacular way – that of deep impressions, without spectacle or glamour or dramatic events. Always expecting the spectacular, many will miss entirely the constant flow of revealed communication. Munich Germany Area Conference, 1973, 77)

4 And it came to pass that again they heard the voice, and they <sup>a</sup>understood it not.

5 And again the third time they did hear the voice, and did <sup>a</sup>open their ears to hear it; and their eyes were towards the sound thereof; and they did look steadfastly towards heaven, from whence the sound came.

6 And behold, the third time they did understand the voice which they heard; and it said unto them:

7 Behold my <sup>a</sup>Beloved Son, <sup>b</sup>in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him. (On other occasions, the voice of the Father has been heard introducing his Son and commanding people to hearken to the words of the Son. This introduction is unique in that it adds the phrase, “in whom I have glorified my name.” No doubt this has reference to Christ’s fulfillment of the atoning sacrifice that makes immortality and eternal life possible for mankind – which is the work and glory of the Father. DCBM, 4:52)

(This is the crowning spiritual event in the Book of Mormon:) 8 And it came to pass, as they understood they cast their eyes up again towards heaven; and behold, they <sup>a</sup>saw a Man <sup>b</sup>descending out of heaven; and he was clothed in a white robe; and he came down and stood in the midst of them; and the eyes of the whole multitude were turned upon him, and they durst not open their mouths, even one to another, and wist not what it meant, for they thought it was an angel that had appeared unto them.

9 And it came to pass that he stretched forth his hand and spake unto the people, saying:

10 Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world.

11 And behold, I am the <sup>a</sup>light and the life of the world; (Dallin H. Oaks: Jesus Christ is the light and life of the world because all things were made by him. Under the direction and according to the plan of God the Father, Jesus Christ is the Creator, the source of the light and life of all things. Jesus Christ is also the light of the world because his example and his teachings illuminate the path we should walk to return

to the presence of our Father in Heaven. Jesus Christ is the light of the world because He is the source of the light that quickens our understanding, because His teachings and His example illuminate our path, and because His power persuades us to do good. Jesus Christ is the *life* of the world because of his unique position in what the scriptures call “the great and eternal plan of deliverance from death.” Jesus Christ is also the life of the world because he has atoned for the sins of the world. With Full Purpose of Heart, 11-14) and I have drunk out of that bitter <sup>b</sup>cup (At the end, meek and lowly Jesus partook of the most bitter cup without becoming the least bitter... By their very nature, tests are unfair. Neal A. Maxwell, CR Apr 1989, 77) which the Father hath given me (Christ’s testimony of himself is regarding his atonement), and have glorified the Father in <sup>c</sup>taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the <sup>d</sup>will of the Father in all things from the beginning. (It is finished, thy will is done. JST)

12 And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words the whole multitude <sup>a</sup>fell to the earth; for they remembered that it had been <sup>b</sup>prophesied among them that Christ should <sup>c</sup>show himself unto them after his ascension into heaven.

13 And it came to pass that the <sup>a</sup>Lord spake unto them saying: (He comes personally to them. He shows them the signs and tokens, and he introduces himself to every one of them, one by one, you see. He has no favorites here, and he doesn’t introduce himself as a member of anything. There’s that marvelous line in the Book of Mormon, “The keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel and he employeth no servant there. (2 Nephi 9:41) He will personally talk with you and bring you in. You are just as important as anybody else in the kingdom of God. Hugh Nibley, Teachings of the Book of Mormon, 3:329-30)

14 Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may <sup>a</sup>thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may <sup>b</sup>feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the <sup>c</sup>God of Israel, and the God of the whole <sup>d</sup>earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world. (Perhaps no more clearly and profoundly is it taught anywhere that Jesus Christ was and is a God – premortally, mortally, and postmortally – than in the Book of Mormon. As he stands before the Nephites we do not see him merely as a great moral teacher or prophet; neither is he described as our Elder Brother, but truly and literally as the God of Israel – the very God in heaven, who Abinadi said would come down among the children of men, and shall redeem his people. DCBM, 4:53 However dim our days or your students’ days may seem they have been a lot darker for the Savior of the world. As a reminder of those days, Jesus has chosen, even in a resurrected, otherwise perfected body, to retain for the benefit of His disciples the wounds in His hands and in His feet and in His side – signs, if you will, that painful things happen even to the pure and the perfect; signs, if you will, that pain in this world is not evidence that God doesn’t love you; signs; if your will, that problems pass and happiness can be ours.... It is the wounded Christ who is the Captain of our souls, He who yet bears the scars of our forgiveness, the lesions of His love and humility, the torn flesh of obedience and sacrifice. These wounds are the principal way we are to recognize Him when He comes. He may invite us forward, as He had invited others, to see and to feel those marks.

Jeffrey R. Holland, Therefore, What? New Testament Conference, 8 Aug 2000, 9)

15 And it came to pass that the multitude went forth, and thrust their hands into his side, and <sup>a</sup>did feel the prints of the nails in his hands and in his feet; and this they did do, going forth one by one until they had all gone forth, (M. Russell Ballard: In that unprecedented appearance of the Father and the Son in the Sacred Grove, the very first word spoken by the Father of us all was the personal name of Joseph. Such is our Father’s personal relationship with each of us. He knows our names and yearns for us to become worthy to return to live with Him. In the eyes of the Lord, there may be only *one size* of audience that is of lasting importance—and that is just *one*, each one, you and me, and each *one* of the children of God. The irony of the Atonement is that it is infinite and eternal, yet it is applied individually, one person at a time. Ensign, May 2004, 86-87. C. S. Lewis put it this way: “[God] has infinite attention to spare for each one of us. He does not have to deal with us in the mass. You are as much alone with Him as if you were the only being He had ever created. When Christ died, He died for you individually just as much as if you had been the only man [or woman] in the world” (Mere

*Christianity* [1943], 131.) and did see with their eyes and did feel with their hands, and did know of a surety and did bear record, that it was he, of whom it was written by the prophets, that should come. (“There were about 2500 persons who saw and felt his physical body on that occasion (see 3 Nephi 17:25). Even at three or four seconds each, ‘one by one,’ that would take several hours. (If it took 10 seconds each, it would have taken 7 hours.) The passage we have just read is one of the greatest scriptural records in our possession. It is clear that ‘showing’ himself involved more than having them merely look. It was sight, sound, touch, and a witness of the Spirit.” (*Book of Mormon Symposium Series*, “The Keystone Scripture”, edited by PR Cheesman, MS Nyman, and CD Tate, Jr., 1988, p. 31) Howard W. Hunter: “That experience took time, but it was important that each individual have the experience, that each set of eyes and each pair of hands have that reaffirming, *personal* witness. Later Christ treated the Nephite children exactly the same way. ‘He took their little children, *one by one*, and blessed them, and prayed unto the Father for them’ (3 Ne 17:21 emphasis added).” (*Teachings of Howard W. Hunter*, p. 209) Jeffrey R. Holland: “At that invitation, the entire multitude went forth ‘one by one,’ thrusting their hands into his side and feeling the prints of the nails in his hands and feet. Even though the power of the Resurrection could have—and undoubtedly one day will have—completely restored and made new the wounds from the crucifixion, nevertheless Christ chose to retain those wounds for a purpose, including for his appearance in the last days when he will show those marks and reveal that he was wounded ‘in the house of [his] friends’ (D&C 45:52). The wounds in his hands, feet, and side are signs that in mortality painful things happen even to the pure and the perfect, signs that tribulation is not evidence that God does not love us. It is a significant and hopeful fact that it is the wounded Christ who comes to our rescue. He who bears the scars of sacrifice, the lesions of love, the emblems of humility and forgiveness is the Captain of our Soul. That evidence of pain in mortality is undoubtedly intended to give courage to others who are also hurt and wounded by life, perhaps even in the house of their friends. In spite of the size of the great multitude, Christ nevertheless took time for each one to have that personal experience.” (*Christ And The New Covenant*, p. 259. Melvin J. Ballard: “On this occasion I had sought the Lord, . . . and that night I received a wonderful manifestation and impression which has never left me. I was carried to this place [the Salt Lake Temple]—into this room. . . I was told there was another privilege that was to be mine; and I was led into a room where I was informed I was to meet someone. As I entered the room I saw, seated on a raised platform, the most glorious being I have ever conceived of, and was taken forward to be introduced to Him. As I approached He smiled, called my name, and stretched out His hands toward me. If I live to be a million years old I shall never forget that smile. He put His arms around me and kissed me, as He took me into His bosom, and He blessed me until my whole being was thrilled. As He finished I fell at His feet, and there saw the marks of the nails; and as I kissed them, with deep joy swelling through my whole being, I felt that I was in heaven indeed. The feeling that came to my heart then was: Oh! if I could live worthy. . . so that in the end when I have finished I could go into His presence and receive the feeling that I *then* had in His presence, I would give everything that I am and ever hope to be!” (in *Melvin J. Ballard . . . Crusader for Righteousness* [1966], 66).)

16 And when they had all gone forth and had witnessed for themselves, they did cry out with one accord, saying:

17 Hosanna! (Save now, save we pray. It was commonly used in ancient times in connection with the worship of Jehovah at the Feast of Tabernacles. Shouting Hosannas and waving palm branches was means of worshipping the Messiah and acknowledging his saving power. No doubt the Nephites were familiar with this conceptual meaning of Hosanna. But what is most important in this verse, is that the people were so overcome with love and gratitude that they worshipped the very person for whom these ancient Hosannas had been reserved. In the modern church also the Hosanna shout is used as a sacred means of worshipping the Lord and expressing our profound respect, love and gratitude for him and his holy mission. The modern proclamations of Hosanna are usually reserved for deeply sacred events such as temple dedications. Whether done anciently or today, it is a symbol of deep reverence for and

worship of our Lord. DCBM, 4:53-54.) Blessed be the name of the Most High God! And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus, and did <sup>a</sup>worship him.

18 And it came to pass that he spake unto <sup>a</sup>Nephi (for Nephi was among the multitude) (See how humble Nephi is, he's with the multitude.) and he commanded him that he should come forth.

19 And Nephi arose and went forth, and <sup>a</sup>bowed himself before the Lord and did <sup>b</sup>kiss his feet. (Bruce R. McConkie: "I testify that he is the Son of the Living God and was crucified for the sins of the world. He is our Lord, our God, and our King. This I know of myself independent of any other person. I am one of his witnesses, and in a coming day I shall feel the nail marks in his hands and in his feet and shall wet his feet with my tears. But I shall not know any better than I know now that he is God's Almighty Son, that he is our Savior and Redeemer, and that salvation comes in and through his atoning blood and in no other way." (*Conference Report*, May 1985 *Ensign*, p. 9))

20 And the Lord commanded him that he should <sup>a</sup>arise. And he arose and stood before him. (He lifts us up to stand on our feet.)

**PREACH MY GOSPEL: SEARCH THE FOLLOWING SCRIPTURES AND MAKE A LIST OF THE QUALIFICATIONS AND COVENANT OF BAPTISM. DISCUSS HOW TO TEACH THOSE REQUIREMENTS TO OTHERS.** 2 Nephi 31:13; Alma 7:14-16; Moroni 6:1-4; Mosiah

18:8-10; 3 Nephi 11:21-41; D&C 20:37 21 And the Lord said unto him: I give unto you <sup>a</sup>power (Jesus is giving new priesthood keys to have authority in the new church. Nephi was not being given any additional priesthood by the Lord, but rather he was receiving new authority to perform ordinances associated with the new organization that Christ established among them. With old things done away, Nephi was given power and authority to administer in the new things in a dispensation with the fullness of gospel ordinances. Nephi, in turn, was then able to ordain (or in our terminology, "set apart" others to establish and set in order this new Church. DCBM, 4:56) that ye shall <sup>b</sup>baptize this people when I am again ascended into heaven. (Reading these verses, one may wonder whether Nephi did not already have priesthood authority and whether the ordinance of baptism was not already being practiced among the Nephites. The answer to both questions would be yes. Nephi already had authority, and baptism was already being practiced. The doctrinal significance of these verses is not merely to reiterate the importance of baptism by proper priesthood authority but rather to demonstrate the establishment of a new gospel dispensation among the Nephites and the accompanying ordinations and ordinances that a new dispensation necessitated. Of the events described in these verses, President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: There is nothing strange in the fact that when the Lord came to the Nephites, Nephi was baptized and so was everybody else although they had been baptized before. The Church among the Nephites before the coming of Christ was not in its fullness and was under the law of Moses. The Savior restored the fullness and gave them all the ordinances and blessings of the gospel. Therefore, it actually became a new organization, and through baptism they came into it. We have a similar condition in this dispensation. The Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were baptized by command of the angel John the Baptist. Several others were baptized before the organization of the Church. However, on the day the Church was organized, all who had been previously baptized were baptized again, not for the remission of sins, but for entrance into the Church. In each case the reason was the same. Answers to Gospel Questions 3:205-6, DCBM, 4:55-56)

22 And again the Lord called <sup>a</sup>others, and said unto them likewise; and he gave unto them power to baptize. And he said unto them: On this wise shall ye baptize; and there shall be <sup>b</sup>no disputations among you.

**PREACH MY GOSPEL: BAPTISM, OUR FIRST COVENANT: CHRIST'S EXAMPLE: 2 Nephi 31:4-18; Matthew 3:13-17. THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT: Mosiah 5:8-10; Mosiah 18:8-10; D&C 20:37. QUALIFICATIONS FOR BAPTISM: 2 Nephi 9:23; Mosiah 18:8-10; Alma 7:14-15; 3 Nephi 11:23-27; Moroni 6:1-4; D&C 20:37; Acts 2:37-39. THE LORD INSTITUTES THE SACRAMENT: 3 Nephi 18:1-18; Luke 22:15-20. PROMISED BLESSINGS OF BAPTISM: Mosiah 4:11-12, 26; Moroni 8:25-26; John 3:5; Romans 6:4. THE SACRAMENTAL PRAYERS:**

**Moroni 4 and 5; D&C 20:75-79. PARTAKING OF THE SACRAMENT: D&C 27:2; 1**

**Corinthians 11:23-29. NECESSITY FOR AUTHORITY: D&C 22; Hebrews 5:4.** 23 Verily I say

unto you, that whoso repenteth of his sins through your <sup>a</sup>words, and <sup>b</sup>desireth to be baptized in my name, on this wise shall ye baptize them—Behold, ye shall go down and <sup>c</sup>stand in the water, and in my name shall ye baptize them.

24 And now behold, these are the words which ye shall say, calling them by name, saying:

25 Having <sup>a</sup>authority (Today we say, “Having been commissioned...” The phrase, Having authority is used in the temple.) given me of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the <sup>b</sup>Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. (“Some students have raised the question as to why the words of the baptismal prayer in the Book of Mormon differ slightly from the prayer listed in the Doctrine and Covenants. In this dispensation the Lord has counseled us to use these words in baptizing a person, after calling the candidate by name: ‘Having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.’ (D&C 20:73.) The only difference in the two prayers is the introductory statement. In the Book of Mormon the disciples were counseled to say ‘having authority given me of Jesus Christ,’ whereas in this dispensation we are told to say ‘having been commissioned of Jesus Christ.’ ...[One] possibility for explaining this difference is that the disciples in the Book of Mormon received their authority directly from Jesus Christ; therefore, they rightfully could say ‘having authority given me of Jesus Christ.’ However, in this dispensation priesthood bearers have been given the power to baptize from John the Baptist, who was commissioned by Jesus Christ to come to earth and restore this authority. Therefore, in this dispensation we use the words ‘having been commissioned of Jesus Christ.’” (Daniel Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, p. 262-3))

26 And then shall ye <sup>a</sup>immerse them in the water, and come forth again out of the water.

27 And after this manner shall ye <sup>a</sup>baptize in my name; for behold, verily I say unto you, that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are <sup>b</sup>one; and I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and the Father and I are one.

28 And according as I have commanded you thus shall ye baptize. And there shall be no <sup>a</sup>disputations among you, as there have hitherto been; neither shall there be disputations among you concerning the points of my doctrine, as there have hitherto been. (Russell M. Nelson: “As we dread any disease that undermines the health of the body, so should we deplore contention, which is a corroding canker of the spirit...My concern is that contention is becoming accepted as a way of life. From what we see and hear in the media, the classroom, and the workplace, all are now infected to some degree with contention... Well do I remember a friend who would routinely sow seeds of contention in church classes. His assaults would invariably be preceded by this predictable comment: ‘Let me play the role of devil’s advocate.’ Recently he passed away. One day he will stand before the Lord in judgment, Then, I wonder, will my friend’s predictable comment again be repeated?” (*Conference Report*, Apr. 1989, p. 85 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 411-2) George Q. Cannon: “My brethren and sisters, above all things, therefore, we should seek for this spirit of union and love. It should be sought for in our councils, and we should not contend. Now, suppose that I should take it into my head to say that a certain doctrine is true, and I contend for it, determined to have it so; does my contention make it true? Suppose that I should contend from now until the Savior came that it is true, would my contention make it true? Certainly not. I cannot change a principle of truth. Then why contend or dispute, or argue about it?... There can be no change wrought in doctrine and in truth by our contention. But I will tell you where there is room for differences of opinion--in regard to the policy to be pursued. There ought to be no contention, however. God speaks against it. We have no right to be a disputing, contentious people. And whenever I dispute with my brother I am likely to grieve the Spirit of the Lord and darken my own mind. Therefore, let us avoid contention, in our councils and in all our intercourse one with another.” (*Collected Discourses 1886-1898*, ed. by Brian Stuy, vol. 4, George Q. Cannon, Apr. 7, 1895) Dallin H. Oaks: “The commandment

to avoid contention applies to those who are right as well as to those who are wrong. It is not enough for the Savior's followers to have a correct understanding of doctrine and procedure. They must also be harmonious in their personal relationships and in the way they seek to serve him. In the years following the Savior's personal ministry to his followers on the American continent, all were converted and enjoyed a golden age of righteousness, peace, and prosperity. I find it significant that the scriptural description of this period stresses that 'there were no contentions and disputations among them' (4 Ne. 1:2; also see verse 15), suggesting that the absence of contention is a most significant bellwether of righteousness." (*The Lord's Way*, p. 142) Joseph F. Smith: "I pray God that this spirit may especially enter into the hearts of this people, that they may strive for peace among themselves, that peace may dwell in their own hearts and houses, that peace may exist between neighbors, that peace, goodwill, love and union may characterize the associations of members of the Church with their fellow members, and that there may be no contention among them, nor strife, nor bitterness, nor back-sliding, nor back-biting, nor complaint of any description, but that peace on earth and good will to men may pervade the hearts and minds of all the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and that from them this spirit of peace and love for God and for our fellow man may go out into the world, as far as we have power to send it forth through the elders of the Church and otherwise, that men may hear the good tidings and receive them in their hearts, obey the truth, and join the ranks of the peaceful, of the peace-loving, of the peace-makers, of the God-fearing, and of the God-loving people that all Latter-day Saints should be, in every part of the world." (*Conference Reports*, Oct. 1914))

**SCRIPTURE MASTERY 29** For verily, verily I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention (over doctrine) is not of me, but is of the <sup>b</sup>devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another.

30 Behold, this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger, one against another; but this is my doctrine, that such things <sup>a</sup>should be done away.

**PREACH MY GOSPEL: WHAT IS THE GOSPEL, OR DOCTRINE OF CHRIST?** 2 Nephi 31:10-21; 3 Nephi 11:31-41; 3 Nephi 27:13-22 **PREACH MY GOSPEL: THE ATONEMENT: RESURRECTION** 2 Nephi 9:6-7; D&C 88:27-32; JST, 1 Corinthians 15:40; Alma 11:42-45; Luke 24:1-10, 36-39; Topical Guide: Resurrection; Alma 40:23; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; Bible Dictionary: Death, Resurrection; Helaman 14:15-19; 1 Corinthians 15:41-42 **ATONEMENT** 2 Nephi 2:6-8; D&C 19:15-19; 1 John 1:7; Alma 7:11-13; D&C 45:3-5; Bible Dictionary: Atonement; Alma 34:8-10; John 3:16-17 **THE GOSPEL – THE WAY** 2 Nephi 9:1-24; Alma 11:40; 3 Nephi 27; 2 Nephi 31; 3 Nephi 11:31-41; Moroni 7:27-28 **31** Behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, I will declare unto you my <sup>a</sup>doctrine. (The Book of Mormon contains the fullness of the everlasting gospel. While it does not contain all gospel teaching or practices of the modern Church, it nonetheless contains the fullness of the gospel in that it contains the Savior's own teaching of what constitutes his doctrine or gospel. Nephi and his brother Jacob had previously taught and testified of those teachings and ordinances that comprise the doctrine of Christ. Faith, repentance, baptism by water and by fire, endurance in faithfulness to the end, keeping the commandments and following the example of the Savior – these are all integral components of the doctrine of Christ. All of the prophets have testified of these same principles and ordinances that are central to the plan of salvation. DCBM, 4:59.)

**32** And this is my <sup>a</sup>doctrine, and it is the doctrine which the Father hath given unto me; (The plan of salvation was not originated by Jesus, but is indeed the Father's plan. What is the gospel? In the full and eternal sense, it is the plan of salvation, ordained and established by the Father, to enable his spirit children (Christ included!) to advance and progress and become like him. Thus, it includes all things both temporal and spiritual and is as eternal as God himself. Every truth, every eternal verity, every law and power – whether on earth, in heaven, or throughout the boundless universe – all of these are part of the gospel of God. He is their source and author, and all that is has been created for the benefit and blessing of man. Bruce R. McConkie, *New Witness*, p. 132-33, DCBM, 4:59-60) and I bear <sup>b</sup>record of the Father, and the Father beareth record of me, and the <sup>c</sup>Holy Ghost beareth record of the Father and

me; and I bear record that the Father commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent and believe in me.

33 And whoso believeth in me, and is <sup>a</sup>baptized, the same shall be <sup>b</sup>saved; and they are they who shall <sup>c</sup>inherit the kingdom of God.

34 And whoso believeth not in me, and is not <sup>a</sup>baptized, shall be damned.

35 Verily, verily, I say unto you, that this is my doctrine, and I bear record of it from the Father; and whoso <sup>a</sup>believeth in me believeth in the Father also; and unto him will the Father bear record of me, (And record, means “to put back into the heart.” It means “to intensify in the heart, to have a knowledge and remembrance of what you had before.” This has to do with your previous existence. See, your heart is your core. To record is to stir up again in the heart. And he says this is why the Father will bear record of me, and the Holy Ghost will bear record. That will recall these things to you. That’s what a record is. Hugh Nibley, Teachings of the Book of Mormon, 3:332) for he will visit him <sup>b</sup>with fire and with the <sup>c</sup>Holy Ghost.

36 And thus will the Father bear record of me, and the <sup>a</sup>Holy Ghost will bear record unto him of the Father and me; for the Father, and I, and the Holy Ghost are <sup>b</sup>one.

37 And again I say unto you, ye must repent, and <sup>a</sup>become as a <sup>b</sup>little child, and be baptized in my name, or ye can in nowise receive these things.

38 And again I say unto you, ye must repent, and be baptized in my name, and become as a little <sup>a</sup>child, (The requirement to become as a little child to enter into the kingdom of God means much more than childlike innocence. It implies a submission to the will of the Father and a recognition of our total dependence upon the Lord. DCBM, 4:61) or ye can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God.

39 Verily, verily, I say unto you, that this is my <sup>a</sup>doctrine, and whoso <sup>b</sup>buildesth upon this buildeth upon my rock, and the <sup>c</sup>gates of hell shall not prevail against them.

40 And whoso shall <sup>a</sup>declare more or less than this, (That there is and can only be one gospel – one church, one plan of salvation, one true religion – is as self-evident as any truth known to man. There can no more be two true gospels or two true churches than there can be two true and differing scientific facts. Truth is truth. And truth and salvation and the gospel all are ordained of God. They are what they are; and they are not what they are not. Men either have the truths of salvation or they do not; they either possess the gospel, which is the plan of salvation, or they do not. Anyone in heaven or on earth, in time or eternity, in Paul’s day or ours, anyone who preaches any gospel other than the true one [is accursed]. Why? Because there is no salvation in a false religion. There is no saving power in a man-made system of salvation... And any man – whether mortal or immortal, whether man or angel – who preaches any system other than the very one ordained by Deity, leads men astray and keeps them from gaining celestial salvation. Bruce R. McConkie, Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 2:457-59) and establish it for my doctrine, the same cometh of evil, and is not built upon my rock; but he buildeth upon a <sup>b</sup>sandy foundation, and the gates of hell stand open to receive such when the floods come and the winds beat upon them. (Joseph Fielding Smith: “Now, there are those who declare more or less than this. They will not repent of their sins. They will not accept Jesus as the Redeemer of the world. They will not believe that He spoke the truth when He declared unto the people that He was the Son of God, and that He came to fulfill the mission that was given to Him of His Father, to redeem the world from sin. They reject these things. They will not believe them; hence they remain in the bondage of sin, and cannot be redeemed, because they will not receive the principles by which salvation comes. There are many of this class that go around through the country, stirring up the hearts of the people against the truth, declaring that these things are not so, and that it is unnecessary for men to observe these principles, and ordinances that are declared in the scriptures to be essential to salvation. They are destroying the faith of the people wherever it is possible.” (*Conference Report*, Oct. 1913, p. 72))

41 Therefore, go forth unto this people, and declare the words which I have spoken, unto the ends of the earth.