

Come Follow Me Lesson 44
Ether 1-5 Nov 9-15

Ether 1

2500-2200 BC

From Ether 1:2 one naturally assumes that Moroni made his abridgment directly from the plates themselves. If he did so, we are driven to the conclusion that it was necessary for him to find his way into the Hill Cumorah, where his father had hidden them. Inasmuch as the language of the plates was that of the Jaredite people, it would have been incumbent upon Moroni to translate them by means of the holy "interpreters" or Urim and Thummim before he could abridge them. This would have been a tremendous task, because Moroni says (15:33) that he had not written the hundredth part of the record, and as it is we have 15 chapters or about 31½ printed pages in our current edition. It seems much more reasonable-for the writer at least-to believe that Moroni abridged the translation of the Book of Ether which had been made many hundreds of years before by King Mosiah (Mosiah 28:1-20). This translation would also have been available to Moroni in the hill. Book of Mormon Compendium, Sidney B. Sperry, Chapter 25

In adding the book of Ether to the Book of Mormon, Moroni was probably following instructions from his father. In the book of Mosiah, as Mormon was giving an account of the discovery and translation of the twenty-four gold plates upon which this record was engraved, he had inserted this comment: "And this account shall be written hereafter; for behold, it is expedient that all people should know the things which are written in this account" (Mosiah 28:19). Since this abridgment was made by Moroni, we can assume that Mormon was unable to work on the Jaredite record and had directed his son to do so. It is not clear from the Book of Mormon account whether Moroni translated the twenty-four plates and made his abridgment from that translation or whether he abridged the translation of the twenty-four plates that King Mosiah made around 90 B.C. not long after they were found by the people of Limhi. **As with the Nephite account, the book of Ether is a second, unmistakable witness and warning to those of us in the latter days who enjoy the gospel light, and especially to those who live in the "land choice above all others," that we have a sacred obligation to preserve our nation and our church through righteousness.** Two other important contributions are Moroni's prophecy of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon and Ether's prophecy of the New Jerusalem, both of which must have been instrumental in leading Joseph Smith to inquire about and act upon them. DCBM, 4:259-60.

Genesis 11:1 AND the whole earth was of ~~one~~ (the same) ^alanguage, and of ~~one~~ (the same) speech.
2 And it came to pass, as ~~they~~ (that many) journeyed from the east, (and as they journeyed from the east,) ~~that~~ they found a plain in the land of ^aShinar; and they dwelt there (in the plain of Shinar).
3 And they said one to another, (Come) Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and (they had) ^aslime (or bitumen) ~~had they~~ for mortar.
4 And they said, (Come,) Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top ~~may reach~~ (will be high, nigh) unto heaven; and let us make us a ^aname, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. (According to some modern commentators, the building of the tower was an example of man's extreme pride in his own ability. The building became such an obsession that, according to the Midrash, when a builder fell off the tower to his death, the other builders paid no attention, but when a brick fell, they would cry: "When shall another come in its place?" According to this interpretation, every generation has its own Tower of Babel, when it begins to idolize its technology. The moral of the story is thus as applicable today as it was thousands of years ago. Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)
5 And the LORD came down ~~to see~~ (beholding) the city and the tower, which the children of men

builded (were building).

6 And the LORD said, Behold, the people is ~~one~~ (are the same), and they (all) have ~~all one~~ (the same) language; and this (tower) they begin to ~~do~~: (build,) and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined ~~to do~~.

7 (Except I, the Lord,) ~~Go to, let us go down, and there~~ confound their ^alanguage, that they may not understand one another's speech.

8 So (I,) the LORD (will) scattered them abroad from thence upon (all) the face of all the ~~earth~~: (land, and unto every quarter of the earth. And they were confounded,) and they left off to build the city (and they hearkened not unto the Lord.).

9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD (was displeased with their works, and) did there ^aconfound (Heb balal, mix, confound, a word play on Babel) the ^blanguage of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD ^cscatter them ^dabroad upon the face of ~~all the earth~~ (thereof). (The Book of Mormon shows that the actual confounding of the languages may not have been an instantaneous thing but may have happened over an unknown length of time. Jared asked his brother to call upon the Lord and request that their language be not confounded. This request was granted. Then Jared asked his brother to plead that the language of their friends stay the same as theirs. This request, too, was granted. These events imply that the confounding of the languages did not happen in an instant. Old Testament Student Manual, p. 58)

The record of the Jaredites, taken from the twenty-four plates found by the people of Limhi in the days of king Mosiah.

Moroni abridges the writings of Ether—Ether's genealogy set forth—The language of the Jaredites is not confounded at the Tower of Babel—The Lord promises to lead them to a choice land and make them a great nation.

1 AND now I, Moroni, proceed to give an ^aaccount of those ancient inhabitants who were destroyed by the ^bhand of the Lord upon the face of this north country. (Joseph Fielding Smith: "We understand that they [the Jaredites] landed in Central America where their kingdom existed the greater part of their residence in America." (Doctrines of Salvation, 3:73))

2 And I take mine account from the ^atwenty and four plates which were found by the people of Limhi, which is called the Book of Ether. (From Ether 1:2 one naturally assumes that Moroni made his abridgment directly from the plates themselves. If he did so, we are driven to the conclusion that it was necessary for him to find his way into the hill Cumorah, where his father had hidden them. Inasmuch as the language of the plates was that of the Jaredite people, it would have been incumbent upon Moroni to translate them by means of the holy "interpreters" or Urim and Thummim before he could abridge them. This would have been a tremendous task, because Moroni says (Ether 15:33) that he had not written the hundredth part of the record, and as it is we have fifteen chapters or about thirty-one and one-half printed pages in our current edition. It seems much more reasonable—for the writer at least—to believe that Moroni abridged the translation of the Book of Ether which had been made many hundreds of years before by king Mosiah. (Mosiah 28:1-20) This translation would also have been available to Moroni in the hill. Ludlow, Unlocking the Book of Mormon, 487)

3 And as I suppose that the ^afirst part of this record, which speaks concerning the creation of the world, and also of Adam, and an account from that time even to the great ^btower, and whatsoever things transpired among the children of men until that time, is had among the Jews— (Genesis 1 through 11 describes the tower in the Old Testament and in the brass plates, so he doesn't need to put it here, too.)

4 Therefore I do not write those things which transpired from the days of ^aAdam until that time; but they are had upon the plates; and whoso findeth them, the same will have power that he may get the full account.

5 But behold, I give not the full account, but a ^apart of the account I give, from the tower down until they were destroyed. (Moroni explains that he is abridging the record called the book of Ether contained on the twenty-four gold plates that were discovered by the people of Limhi (see Mosiah 8:5-19; Alma 37:21-31), and that his abridgment does not contain a full account. The full account included important information concerning the Creation, and happenings among the people from Adam down to the time of the Tower of Babel. We note Moroni's recognition that a record of these things "is had among the Jews" (the Bible). Undoubtedly Moroni was also familiar with Nephi's prophecies that the record of the Jews would have many "plain and precious things" removed from it (see 1 Nephi 13:26-29). Hence the person who would bring Moroni's record to light in the last days would also "have power that he may get the full account" of those things on the plates of Ether. This statement may have reference at least in part to the sealed portion of the plates delivered to the Prophet Joseph. These "plain and precious" things-the full account of the Creation and the history of God's dealings with his children from Adam to the Tower of Babel-surely will be among those "many great and important things" that will yet be revealed (see 2 Nephi 27:11; 3 Nephi 26:8-10; Ether 4:4-7; Articles of Faith 1:9). The Lord has promised that as we prepare ourselves spiritually, both as a Church and as individuals, important things that have been "sealed" or hidden from the world will be revealed to us (see Alma 12:9-11). Elder Neal A. Maxwell stated: "Just as there will be many more Church members,... there will also be many more nourishing and inspiring scriptures. However, we must first feast worthily upon that which we already have." (Conference Report, October 1986, p. 70.) DCBM, 4:261)

6 And on this wise do I give the account. He that wrote this record was ^aEther, and he was a descendant of Coriantor. (This is not necessarily a genealogy since there are some gaps from father to son. Three times in the genealogical list of thirty names running back to the great tower, the word "descendant" occurs in place of "son." As you know, in Hebrew and other languages "son" and "descendant" are both rendered by one very common work... A person confined to a written text would have no means of knowing when *ben* should be taken to mean "son" in a literal sense and when it means merely "descendant." Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert and the World of the Jaredites*, 148-149.)

7 Coriantor was the son of Moron. (This guy must not have been very smart.)

8 And Moron was the son of Ethem.

9 And Ethem was the son of Ahah.

10 And Ahah was the son of Seth.

11 And Seth was the son of Shiblön.

12 And Shiblön was the son of Com.

13 And Com was the son of Coriantum.

14 And Coriantum was the son of Amnigaddah.

15 And Amnigaddah was the son of Aaron.

16 And Aaron was a descendant of Heth, who was the son of Hearthom.

17 And Hearthom was the son of Lib.

18 And Lib was the son of Kish.

19 And Kish was the son of Corom.

20 And Corom was the son of Levi.

21 And Levi was the son of Kim.

22 And Kim was the son of Morianton.

23 And Morianton was a descendant of Riplakish.

24 And Riplakish was the son of Shez.

25 And Shez was the son of Heth.

26 And Heth was the son of Com.

27 And Com was the son of Coriantum.

28 And Coriantum was the son of Emer.

29 And Emer was the son of Omer.

30 And Omer was the son of Shule.

31 And Shule was the son of Kib.

32 And ^aKib was the son of ^bOrihah, who was the son of Jared;

33 Which ^aJared came forth with his brother and their families, with some others and their families, from the great tower, (Orson Pratt: The people being of one language, gathered together to build a tower to reach, as they supposed, the crystallized heavens. They thought that the City of Enoch was caught up a little ways from the earth, and that the city was within the first sphere above the earth; and that if they could get a tower high enough, they might get to heaven, where the City of Enoch and the inhabitants thereof were located. JD, 16:50. Tradition credits Joseph Smith with the statement that the “heaven” they had in view was the translated city. Cowley & Whitney on Doctrine, 307. Milton R. Hunter: “A few years ago an apostle said to me: ‘It would be a discovery of great significance if one were to find an Indian book which sustained the Book of Mormon.’ Such a book exists; in fact, I shall present quotations from...such Indian books produced during the American colonial period that contain materials similar to those found in the Book of Mormon. The Indian writers add their witness to the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. Ixtlilxochitl, an Indian prince who lived in the valley of Mexico, wrote a book containing the history of his ancestors from the time of their arrival in America until the coming of the Spaniards... Ixtlilxochitl...claims that the first settlers to come to America following the flood came from ‘a very high tower’ or the Tower of Babel. Observe how similar the accounts are as I quote from them. ‘Jared came forth with his brother and their families, with some others and their families, from the great tower, at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people, and swore in his wrath that they should be scattered upon all the face of the earth; and according to the word of the Lord the people were scattered.’ (Eth. 1:33.) Ixtlilxochitl, the Indian writer, puts it this way: ‘And . . . men, multiplying made a . . . very high tower, in order to shelter themselves in it when the second world should be destroyed...When things were at their best, their language was changed and, not understanding each other, they went to different parts of the world.’ (Works of Ixtlilxochitl, cited in Milton R. Hunter and Thomas Stuart Ferguson, Ancient America and The Book of Mormon, 1950, p. 24.) In order that we might make additional comparison of the Book of Mormon and the Works of Ixtlilxochitl, we quote the Jaredite record: . . . the Lord had compassion upon Jared; therefore he did not confound the language of [Jared's people]. . .’ (Eth. 1:35, 37.) Then the Lord guided Jared's colonists over the land to the seashore and, in barges brought them to America, ‘into a land which [he declared] is choice above all the lands of the earth.’ (Eth. 1:42.) “The comparable story in Ixtlilxochitl states: . . . and the Tultecas, who were as many as seven companions and their wives, who understood their language among themselves, came to these parts, having first crossed lands and seas, living in caves and undergoing great hardships, until they came to this land, which they found good and fertile for their habitation.’(Ixtlilxochitl, op. cit., pp. 24-25.)” (Conference Report, Apr. 1970, pp. 100-101)) at the time the Lord ^bconfounded the language of the people, and swore in his wrath that they should be scattered upon all the ^cface of the earth; and according to the word of the Lord the people were scattered. (“Of interest to the critical reader is the fact that the beginnings of the Jaredite nation are attributed by Moroni to the Tower of Babel episode, mentioned also in the Book of Genesis (11:3). At the present time, most Bible scholars do not believe in this episode as an actual fact; they consider it a myth. If this belief were correct, we should have to assume that the whole of the Book of Ether is based on a misconception. It should be pointed out, however, that one of the great values of the Book of Mormon is the fact that it affirms the essential truth of the Bible. The Tower episode is a case in point. The Mormon people do believe in it. Despite the claims of critics to the contrary, we believe that in the due time of the Lord the Genesis account of the Tower of Babel will be found to be correct.” (Sidney B. Sperry, Book of Mormon Compendium, p. 464))

34 And the ^abrother of Jared (Moroni nowhere gives us the name of Jared's brother, but consistently refers to him as "the brother of Jared." From the account it is clear that he is "highly favored of the Lord" and is the spiritual leader of Jared's people. Why is his name not recorded in the Book of

Mormon? Daniel H. Ludlow has suggested three possible reasons: 1) the brother of Jared himself may, out of modesty, have purposely omitted his name from the record in similar manner as did John in recording his Gospel; 2) the final writer on the record or plates of Ether, a descendant of Jared (see Ether 1:6, 32), perhaps emphasized the name of his progenitor; or 3) Moroni may have found the name too difficult to translate adequately into the Nephite language (see A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon, p. 310) DCBM, 4:263. “While residing in Kirtland Elder Reynolds Cahoon had a son born to him. One day when President Joseph Smith was passing his door he called the Prophet in and asked him to bless and name the baby. Joseph did so and gave the boy the name of Mahonri Moriancumer. When he had finished the blessing he laid the child on the bed, and turning to Elder Cahoon he said, 'The name I have given your son is the name of the brother of Jared; the Lord has just shown (or revealed) it to me.' Elder William F. Cahoon, who was standing near, heard the Prophet make this statement to his father; and this was the first time the name of the brother of Jared was known in the Church in this dispensation.” (“The Jaredites,” Juvenile Instructor, 1 May 1892, p. 282)) being a large and mighty man, and a man highly favored of the Lord, Jared, his brother, said unto him: Cry (Notice that the scripture says that he “cries” unto the Lord but the word “pray” is not used. This is intent prayers he is offering.) unto the Lord, that he will not confound us that we may not ^bunderstand our words.

35 And it came to pass that the brother of Jared did cry unto the Lord, and the Lord had compassion upon Jared; therefore he did not confound the ^alanguage of Jared; and Jared and his brother were not confounded. (Joseph Fielding Smith: “It is stated in the Book of Ether that Jared and his brother made the request of the Lord that their language be not changed at the time of the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel. Their request was granted, and they carried with them the speech of their fathers, the Adamic language, which was powerful even in its written form, so that the things Mahonri wrote ‘were mighty even...unto the overpowering of man to read them.’ (Ether 12:24) That was the kind of language Adam had and this was the language with which Enoch was able to accomplish his mighty work.” (The Way to Perfection, p. 69))

36 Then Jared said unto his brother: Cry again unto the Lord, and it may be that he will turn away his anger from them who are our ^afriends, that he confound not their language.

37 And it came to pass that the brother of Jared did cry unto the Lord, and the Lord had compassion upon their friends and their families also, that they were not confounded.

38 And it came to pass that Jared spake again unto his brother, saying: Go and ^ainquire of the Lord whether he will drive us out of the land, and if he will drive us out of the land, cry unto him whither we shall go. And who knoweth but the Lord will carry us forth into a land which is ^bchoice above all the earth? And if it so be, let us be faithful unto the Lord, that we may receive it for our inheritance.

39 And it came to pass that the brother of Jared did cry unto the Lord according to that which had been spoken by the mouth of Jared.

40 And it came to pass that the Lord did hear the brother of Jared, and ^ahad compassion upon him, and said unto him:

41 Go to and gather together thy ^aflocks, both male and female, of every kind; and also of the ^bseed of the earth of every kind; and ^cthy ^dfamilies; and also Jared thy brother and his family; and also thy ^efriends and their families, and the friends of Jared and their families.

42 And when thou hast done this thou shalt ^ago at the head of them down into the valley which is northward. And there will I meet thee, and I will go ^bbefore thee into a land which is ^cchoice above all the lands of the earth. (“The Book of Mormon informs us that the whole of America, both North and South, is a choice land above all other lands, in other words-Zion,” declared President Joseph Fielding Smith (Doctrines of Salvation 3:73). DCBM, 4:264)

43 And there will I bless thee and thy seed, and raise up unto me of thy seed, and of the seed of thy brother, and they who shall go with thee, a great nation. And ^athere shall be none ^bgreater than the nation which I will raise up unto me of thy seed, upon all the face of the earth. And thus I will do unto thee

because this long time ye have cried unto me. (President Spencer W. Kimball eloquently spoke of the effort, both spiritual and mental, that is required to receive answers to our prayers: "Great decisions must be made by most of us. The Lord has provided a way for these answers. If the question is which school, what occupation, where to live, whom to marry, or such other vital questions, you should do all that is possible to solve it. Too often, like Oliver Cowdery [see D&C 9:7-9], we want our answers without effort.... "The Lord does answer our prayers, but sometimes we are not responsive enough to know when and how they are answered. We want the 'writing on the wall' or an angel to speak or a heavenly voice. . . . There must be works with faith. How futile it would be to ask the Lord to give us knowledge, but the Lord will help us to acquire knowledge, to study constructively, to think clearly, and to retain things we have learned. . . . Do you get answers to your prayers? If not, perhaps you did not pay the price. Do you offer a few trite words and worn-out phrases, or do you talk intimately to the Lord? Do you pray occasionally when you should be praying regularly, often, constantly? Do you offer pennies to pay heavy debts when you should give dollars to erase that obligation? When you pray do you just speak, or do you also listen? Your Savior said, 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.' (Revelation 3:20.) . . . The Lord stands knocking. He never retreats. But he will never force himself upon us. If we ever move apart, it is we who move and not the Lord. And should we ever fail to get an answer to our prayers, we must look into our lives for a reason." ("Prayer," New Era, March 1978, pp. 16-17.) DCBM, 4:264-65)

Ether 2

The Jaredites prepare for their journey to a promised land—It is a choice land whereon men must serve Christ or be swept off—The Lord talks to the brother of Jared for three hours—They build barges—The Lord asks the brother of Jared to propose how the barges shall be lighted.

1 AND it came to pass that Jared and his brother, and their families, and also the ^afriends of Jared and his brother and their families, went down into the valley which was northward, (and the name of the valley was ^bNimrod, ("He persuaded them not to ascribe [their prosperity] to God, as if it was through his means they were happy...He also said he would be revenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to be able to reach! And that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers! Now the multitude were very ready to follow the determination of Nimrod, and to esteem it a piece of cowardice to submit to God; and they built a tower." (Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, chap. IV, v. 2-3) Nibley notes that Nimrod was bent on avenging his ancestors' death by engaging God in an archery match and was building the tower high enough to shoot his arrows into heaven (*Collected Works of Hugh Nibley*, vol. 5:165). In this state of spiritual rebellion the Lord didn't send rain, but confusion, hence the meaning of the name Babel in Hebrew (Josephus, Book I, 4:3). Literally the Lord changed their language from the unity of Adam's tongue to a jumble of unintelligible speech from which our modern multiplicity of languages stems.) being called after the mighty hunter) with their ^cflocks which they had gathered together, male and female, of every kind.

2 And they did also lay snares and catch ^afowls of the air; and they did also prepare a vessel, in which they did carry with them the fish of the waters.

3 And they did also carry with them **deseret**, (It is a Jaredite word that Mormon has translated for our benefit.) which, by interpretation, is a honey bee; and thus they did carry with them ^aswarms of bees, (Hugh Nibley: The Jaredites carried hives of bees from Babel into the wilderness for a journey of many years, but there is no mention of bees in the cargo of their ships (Ether 5:4)—a significant omission, since our author elsewhere goes out of his way to mention them. The survival of the word *bee* in the New World after the bees themselves had been left behind is a phenomenon having many parallels in the history of language, but the Book of Mormon nowhere mentions bees or honey as existing in the

Western Hemisphere. Lehi in the Desert, 189) and all manner of that which was upon the face of the land, ^bseeds of every kind.

4 And it came to pass that when they had come down into the valley of Nimrod the Lord came down and talked with the brother of Jared; and he was in a ^acloud, and the brother of Jared saw him not.

5 And it came to pass that the Lord commanded them that they should ^ago forth into the wilderness, yea, into that quarter where there never had man been. And it came to pass that the Lord did go before them, and did talk with them as he stood in a ^bcloud, and gave ^cdirections whither they should travel.

6 And it came to pass that they did travel in the wilderness, and did ^abuild ^bbarges, in which they did cross many waters. (Hugh Nibley explains that in ancient Asia Minor, there were many large bodies of water, “Now it is a fact that in ancient times the plains of Asia were covered with ‘many waters’, which have now disappeared but are recorded as existing well down into historic times; they were of course far more abundant in Jared’s time... The steady and continual drying up of the Asiatic ‘heartland’ since the end of the last ice age is one of the basic facts of history.” (Lehi in the Desert and the World of the Jaredites, pp. 178) “It [is] our guess that the Caspian was ‘the sea in the wilderness’ that the Jaredites had to cross (Ether 2:7).” (An Approach to the Book of Mormon, p. 330)) being directed continually by the hand of the Lord.

7 And the Lord would not suffer that they should stop beyond the sea in the wilderness, but he would that they should come forth even unto the ^aland of promise, which was choice above all other lands, which the Lord God had ^bpreserved for a righteous people. (They were supposed to keep moving and not stop here.)

8 And he had sworn in his wrath unto the brother of Jared, that whoso should possess this land of promise, from that time henceforth and forever, should ^aserve him, the true and only God, or they should be ^bswept off when the fulness of his wrath should come upon them.

9 And now, we can behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise; and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall serve God, or they shall be ^aswept off when the fulness of his ^bwrath shall come upon them. And the fulness of his wrath cometh upon them when they are ^cripened in iniquity. (J. Reuben Clark, Jr.: This is a Christian nation. Before the Revolution it was so in accord with law; since the Revolution it has remained so in fact. We, the people of the United States, guarantee full religious freedom to all within our jurisdiction, whether they be non-Christian or Pagan. But the nation itself is a Christian nation. Our standards and principles are Christian. Other creeds we protect, that all may be free. These facts must never be lost sight of. CR Oct 1939, 10)

10 For behold, this is a land which is choice above all other lands; wherefore he that doth possess it shall serve God or shall be ^aswept off; for it is the everlasting decree of God. And it is not until the ^bfulness of iniquity among the children of the land, that they are ^cswept off. (Moroni put the Book of Ether in this place within the Book of Mormon to show how another civilization was swept off this continent like their civilization was swept off as a warning to us to worship Christ or be swept off this continent.)

11 And this cometh unto you, O ye ^aGentiles, that ye may know the decrees of God—that ye may repent, and not continue in your iniquities until the fulness come, that ye may not bring down the fulness of the ^bwrath of God upon you as the inhabitants of the land have hitherto done.

12 Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be ^afree from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but ^bserve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ, who hath been manifested by the things which we have written. (President Joseph Fielding Smith testified of this prophecy: "These passages of scripture from the Book of Mormon are true; this nation is not exempt, and the people, if they continue to pursue the course of evil and ungodliness that they are now treading, shall eventually be punished. If they continue to disregard the warning voice of the Lord, deny their Redeemer, turn from his gospel unto fables and false theories, and rebel against all that he has through his servants in this day declared for the salvation of man; and if they increase in the practice of iniquity, I want to say to you, that if they do these things, the judgments of the Lord will come upon this land, and this nation will not be saved; we will not be spared from war, from

famine, from pestilence and finally from destruction, as a nation. Therefore, I call upon the people, not only Latter-day Saints but to all throughout the whole land, to repent of their sins and to accept the-Lord Jesus Christ, who is our Redeemer and the God of this land. Turn from your evil ways, repent of your sins and receive the fulness of the gospel through the waters of baptism and obedience, that the judgments which shall be poured out upon the ungodly may pass you by." (Doctrines of Salvation 3:321-22.))

13 And now I proceed with my record; for behold, it came to pass that the Lord did bring Jared and his brethren forth even to that great sea which divideth the lands. And as they came to the sea they pitched their tents; and they called the name of the place ^aMoriancumer; (Places were always named after the first person who inhabits the land.) and they dwelt in ^btents, and dwelt in tents upon the seashore for the space of four years. (They liked the beach area so much they didn't want to leave it.)

14 And it came to pass at the end of four years that the Lord came again unto the brother of Jared, and stood in a cloud and ^atalked with him. And for the space of three hours did the Lord talk with the brother of Jared, and ^bchastened him because he remembered not to ^ccall upon the name of the Lord. (It seems highly unlikely that a man of the spiritual stature of the brother of Jared-one who had received marvelous manifestations and had previously exercised great faith in the Lord-would suddenly cease praying to his Maker. It may be that what this verse is saying to us is that Mahonri Moriancumer was chastened by the Lord because he had not fully followed and implemented the counsels of the Lord previously received. It may be that in the relative comfort of the seashore he had allowed his prayers to become less fervent, more casual and routine. He may have been calling upon the Lord in word, but not in faith and deed. Verse 13 perhaps suggests this: they "dwelt in tents upon the seashore for the space of four years." The Lord had taught them and prepared them, but it appears that they had tarried too long, for which the brother of Jared was chastened. (Compare Alma 37:42.) The messages and applications, of this episode for us today may be twofold: 1) that "calling upon the Lord" is much more than merely "saying prayers." President Spencer W. Kimball taught that "we would not ask a Church leader for advice, then disregard it. We must never ask the Lord for blessings, then ignore the answer." ("Prayer" p. 19) "Calling upon the Lord" requires not only frequency and fervency of prayer but also action-commitment to do what the Lord commands and to implement his counsel promptly. 2) From the Lord's chastening the brother of Jared we see also the danger of pausing too long in one place when we need to be moving onward, forward, and upward. Perhaps it was fear of the long ocean journey, complacency created by the comforts of the seashore, or the natural tendency to want to be "commanded in all things" that caused them to delay their journey. Whatever the reason, the Lord desired them, as he desires us, to "press forward." Perhaps the Lord was chastening the brother of Jared in much the same way as President Spencer W Kimball chastened and prodded the Church. "We have paused on some plateaus long enough," he declared. "Let us resume our journey forward and upward. Let us quietly put an end to our reluctance to reach out to others-whether in our own families, wards, or neighborhoods. We have been diverted, at times, from fundamentals on which we must now focus in order to move forward as a person or as a people." (CR, April 1979, p. 114.) DCBM, 4:269-70)

15 And the brother of Jared repented of the evil which he had done, and did call upon the name of the Lord for his brethren who were with him. And the Lord said unto him: I will forgive thee and thy brethren of their sins; but thou shalt not sin any more, (President Spencer W. Kimball taught: "That transgressor is not fully repentant who neglects his tithing, misses his meetings, breaks the Sabbath, fails in his family prayers, does not sustain the authorities of the Church, breaks the Word of Wisdom, does not love the Lord nor his fellowmen. A reforming adulterer who drinks or curses is not repentant. The repenting burglar who has sex play is not ready for forgiveness. God cannot forgive unless the transgressor shows a true repentance which spreads to all areas of his life." (The Miracle of Forgiveness, p. 203.) for ye shall remember that my ^aSpirit will not always ^bstrive with man; wherefore, if ye will sin until ye are fully ripe ye shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord. And these are my ^cthoughts upon the land which I shall give you for your inheritance; for it shall be a land ^dchoice above all other lands.

16 And the Lord said: Go to work and build, after the manner of ^abarges which ye have hitherto built. And it came to pass that the brother of Jared did go to work, and also his brethren, and built barges after the manner which they had built, according to the ^binstructions of the Lord. And they were small, and they were light upon the water, even like unto the lightness of a fowl upon the water.

17 And they were built after a manner that they were exceedingly ^atight, (like Noah's ark. Genesis 6:16 footnote: HEB tsohar; some rabbis believed it was a precious stone that shone in the ark. Ether 6: 7. And it came to pass that when they were buried in the deep there was no water that could hurt them, their vessels being ^atight like unto a dish, and also they were tight like unto the ^bark of Noah; therefore when they were encompassed about by many waters they did cry unto the Lord, and he did bring them forth again upon the top of the waters. The reason the Brother of Jared got the idea to use shining stones in the barges, was because he knew of the story of Noah's ark and that there was a stone which shone in the ark.) even that they would hold water **like unto a dish**; and the bottom thereof was **tight like unto a dish**; and the sides thereof were **tight like unto a dish**; and the ends thereof were peaked; and the top thereof was **tight like unto a dish**; and the length thereof was the length of a tree; and the door thereof, when it was shut, was **tight like unto a dish**. (The Lord has also prepared us to withstand our trials. We are the barges. We are tight like a dish to get through the storms of life.)

18 And it came to pass that the brother of Jared cried unto the Lord, saying: O Lord, I have performed the work which thou hast commanded me, and I have made the barges according as thou hast directed me.

19 And behold, O Lord, in them there is no light; whither shall we steer? And also we shall perish, for in them we cannot breathe, save it is the air which is in them; therefore we shall perish.

20 And the Lord said unto the brother of Jared: (The Lord solves the air problem for them) Behold, thou shalt make a hole in the top, and also in the bottom; and when thou shalt suffer for air thou shalt unstop the hole and receive air. And if it be so that the water come in upon thee, behold, ye shall stop the hole, that ye may not perish in the flood. (A.L. Zobell: After the hole is made it is seen that water will come into the boat. A tube is built from the bottom to the top of the barge, housing in both holes completely. Now we have a funnel right through the boat. Water can come into the tube as high as the water line of the vessel. The model of the barge we have built has a stop hole both in front and in back of the tube, just at the top of the second deck, the living quarters of man and animals. The hold, or bottom, is the place where food, water, and "seed of every kind" are stored. These stop holes can easily be opened or closed as needed. The purpose of the bottom hole is at least twofold: first, it acted as a stabilizer, to keep the barge at an even keel, second, it could be used to get rid of refuse; as a third function, it may also have aided in inducing the circulation of air when the barges were "tossed upon the waves," whereby air would be sucked in and forced out again through the tube. Improvement Era, Apr 1941, 315)

21 And it came to pass that the brother of Jared did so, according as the Lord had commanded.

22 And he cried again unto the Lord saying: O Lord, behold I have done even as thou hast commanded me; and I have prepared the vessels for my people, and behold there is no light in them. Behold, O Lord, wilt thou suffer that we shall cross this great water in darkness?

23 And the Lord said unto the brother of Jared: What will ye that I should do that ye may have light in your vessels? For behold, ye cannot have ^awindows, (Hugh Nibley: This would make the invention of glass far older than anyone dreamed it was until the recent finding of such objects as Egyptian glass beads from "the end of the third millennium B.C." We need not be surprised if the occurrences of glass objects before the sixteenth century B.C. "are few and far between," for glass rots, like wood, and it is a wonder that any of it at all survives from remote antiquity. There is all the difference in the world, moreover, between few glass objects and none at all. Lehi in the Desert, 213-215. Robert J. Matthews: William S. Ellis, in the *National Geographic Magazine* for December 1993, reports that "the most reliable research places the invention of glass sometime in the third millennium before the birth of Christ, in Mesopotamia, or present-day Iraq and Syria" (43-44) and further "the earliest known glassmakers worked in Mesopotamia as far back as 2500 BC, crafting beads and other small objects to

imitate precious stones" (44). Mesopotamia is the general area, and the date of 2500 BC indicates that glass may have been made as much as 300 years before the tower of Babel and, thus, substantiates the story of the brother of Jared. The Book of Mormon: From Zion to Destruction, 20) for they will be dashed in pieces; neither shall ye take fire with you, for ye shall not go by the light of fire.

24 For behold, ye shall be as a ^awhale in the midst of the sea; for the mountain waves shall dash upon you. (Hugh Nibley: "The Lord explained why it would be necessary to build such peculiar vessels: because he was about to loose winds of incredible violence that would make the crossing a frightful ordeal at best: any windows, he warns, will be dashed to pieces; fire will be out of the question; 'ye shall be as a whale in the midst of the sea; for the mountain waves shall dash upon you... This was no normal crossing and no brief passing storm: 'The wind did never cease to blow towards the promised land while they were upon the waters' (Ether 6:8)—'the Lord God caused that there should be a furious wind blow upon the face of the waters; . . . they were many times buried in the depths of the sea, because of the mountain waves which broke upon them, and also the great and terrible tempests which were caused by the fierceness of the wind' (Ether 6:5-6; italics added). It is perfectly clear from our account that the party was to spend a good deal of time below the surface of the sea!" (Lehi in the Desert and the World of the Jaredites, p. 178)) Nevertheless, I will bring you up again out of the depths of the sea; for the ^bwinds have gone forth ^cout of my mouth, and also the ^drains and the floods have I sent forth.

25 And behold, I prepare you against these things; for ye cannot cross this great deep save I prepare you against the waves of the sea, and the winds which have gone forth, and the floods which shall come. (God has prepared each of us as we come to this second estate to be prepared to withstand the afflictions and storms of our lives.) Therefore what will ye that I should prepare for you (Noah had already received a stone that shone in the dark of the ark, so the brother of Jared is going to try to have God touch the stones like the stone Noah used.) that ye may have light when ye are swallowed up in the depths of the sea? (Harold B. Lee: "Then the Lord went away and left him alone. It was as though the Lord were saying to him, 'Look, I gave you a mind to think with, and I gave you agency to use it. Now you do all you can to help yourself with this problem; and then, after you've done all you can, I'll step in to help you.' This is the principle in action. If you want the blessing, don't just kneel down and pray about it. Prepare yourselves in every conceivable way you can in order to make yourselves worthy to receive the blessing you seek. . . . When we are situated that we cannot get anything to help ourselves, then we may call upon the Lord and His servants who can do all. But it is our duty to do what we can within our own power. That is a tremendous principle. In order to teach young people how to approach the Lord and how to prepare to receive what the Lord has promised for those who are faithful, we must teach them these fundamental steps. After Moroni had read this great experience of the brother of Jared, he added: ' . . . wherefore, dispute not because ye see not, for ye receive no witness until after the trial of your faith.' (Ether 12:6.)" (Stand Ye in Holy Places, p. 243-5) What is doctrinally significant about these verses is not so much the content of the Lord's instructions concerning the shape of the barges, the means whereby oxygen was made available, or the lighting of the interior, but rather the process whereby the brother of Jared came to acquire this important information. "What will ye that I should do . . . ?" was the Lord's response to the brother of Jared's prayerful petitions that outlined the group's predicament and their special needs. Implicit in the Lord's question is the Lord's expectation—he expects Moriancumer, and expects each of us as well, to use his intellect and his common sense as he seeks solutions to his problems. Oliver Cowdery learned this lesson the hard way, when the Lord told him that he could not translate because he had erroneously assumed that He would grant him his desires merely for the asking. "Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought, save it was to ask me. But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right." (D&C 9:7-8) It may be that we approach our prayers the way Oliver did. It may be that all too often when we are praying about our problems and our own unique needs the Father may be saying to us: "What will ye that I should do?" We may be forfeiting greater personal revelation and inspired instructions from the Lord because, expecting the Lord to do all

the work, we give no serious study or thought to the solutions but merely ask. Receiving revelation is often a strenuous endeavor that requires intellectual effort coupled with faith and spiritual yearning. (DCBM, 4:271-72.)

Ether 3

The brother of Jared sees the finger of the Lord as he touches the sixteen stones—Christ shows his spirit body to the brother of Jared—Those who have a perfect knowledge cannot be kept from within the veil—Interpreters are provided to bring the Jaredite record to light.

1 AND it came to pass that the brother of Jared, (now the number of the vessels which had been prepared was eight) went forth unto the ^amount, which they called the mount ^bShelem, (Hugh Nibley: "Shelem means high, safe, secure. The word shalom is derived from that. Remember, shalom means you're safe. Shalom is a 'ladder, a high place.' If you're going to a high place, it is a safe place, a secure place, a shelem. He went to the highest mountain around. Moses did the same thing. Lehi and Nephi did the same thing. So again this is a pattern." (Teachings From the Book of Mormon, Lecture 111, p. 271)) because of its exceeding height, and did ^cmolten out of a rock sixteen small stones; (How did he know to make stones for the Lord to touch to make shine? Because he knew that Noah had stones that the Lord touched to shine inside the ark. Andrew C. Skinner: The King James Version of the Old Testament reports that Noah's ark was to have a "window" for a light: "A window shalt thou make to the ark." (Gen. 6:16.) However, some modern Jewish translators of the Hebrew text render this passage: "A *light* shalt thou make to the ark." The word in question, *tsohar*, in the dual form means "noon" or "midday." Ancient Jewish legend relates that it was not just a light in the ark but was actually "a precious stone which illuminated the whole interior of the Ark." Studies in Scripture, 265.) and they were white and clear, even as transparent ^dglass; and he did carry them in his hands upon the top of the mount, and cried again unto the Lord, saying:

2 O Lord, thou hast said that we must be encompassed about by the floods. Now behold, O Lord, and do not be ^aangry with thy servant because of his weakness before thee; for we know that thou art holy and dwellest in the heavens, and that we are ^bunworthy before thee; because of the ^cfall our ^dnatures have become evil continually; nevertheless, O Lord, thou hast given us a commandment that we must call upon thee, that from thee we may receive according to our desires.

3 Behold, O Lord, thou hast smitten us because of our iniquity, and hast driven us forth, and for these many years we have been in the wilderness; nevertheless, thou hast been ^amerciful unto us. O Lord, look upon me in pity, and turn away thine anger from this thy people, and suffer not that they shall go forth across this raging deep in darkness; but behold these ^bthings which I have molten out of the rock.

4 And I know, O Lord, that thou hast all ^apower, and can do whatsoever thou wilt for the benefit of man; therefore touch these stones, O Lord, with thy ^bfinger, and prepare them that they may shine forth in darkness; and they shall shine forth unto us in the vessels which we have prepared, that we may have ^clight while we shall cross the sea. (There are fascinating rabbinic legends to the effect that Noah enjoyed light in the ark because he carried with him divinely given shining stones. If such stories are true, then the brother of Jared was acting in harmony with the deeds of a prophet who was less than a century- and a half removed from him. (See An Approach to the Book of Mormon, chapter 25.) DCBM, 4:273)

5 Behold, O Lord, thou canst do this. We know that thou art able to show forth great power, which ^alooks small unto the understanding of men.

6 And it came to pass that when the brother of Jared had said these words, behold, the ^aLord stretched forth his hand and touched the stones one by one with his ^bfinger. **And the ^cveil was taken from off the eyes of the brother of Jared, and he saw the finger of the Lord;** and it was as the finger of a man, like unto flesh and blood; and the brother of Jared ^dfell down before the Lord, for he was struck with ^efear.

7 And the Lord saw that the brother of Jared had fallen to the earth; and the Lord said unto him: Arise, why hast thou fallen?

8 And he saith unto the Lord: I saw the finger of the Lord, and I feared lest he should ^asmite me; for I knew not that the Lord had flesh and blood.

9 And the Lord said unto him: Because of thy faith thou hast seen that I shall take upon me ^aflesh and blood; and never has man come before me with ^bsuch exceeding faith as thou hast; for were it not so ye could not have seen my finger. Sawest thou more than this?

10 And he answered: Nay; Lord, ^ashow thyself unto me.

11 And the Lord said unto him: ^aBelievest thou the words which I shall speak? (Boyd K. Packer: "There was a test of faith involved, as the Lord asked: 'Believest thou the words which I shall speak?' (Ether 3:11.) Interesting, isn't it, that he was not asked, 'Believest thou the words that I have spoken?' It didn't relate to the past. It related to the future. The brother of Jared was asked to commit himself on something that had not yet happened. He was to confirm his belief in that which the Lord had not yet spoken. . . . Faith, to be faith, must center around something that is not known. Faith, to be faith, must go beyond that for which there is confirming evidence. Faith, to be faith, must go into the unknown. Faith, to be faith, must walk to the edge of the light, and then a few steps into the darkness. If everything has to be known, if everything has to be explained, if everything has to be certified, then there is no need for faith. Indeed, there is no room for it." (quoted in We Talk of Christ, by Neal A. Maxwell, p. 66))

12 And he answered: Yea, Lord, I know that thou speakest the truth, for thou art a God of truth, and ^acanst not lie. (It is not just that God will not lie; he cannot. DCBM, 4:275)

13 And when he had said these words, behold, the Lord ^ashowed himself unto him, and said: ^bBecause thou knowest these things ye are redeemed from the fall; therefore ye are brought back into my ^cpresence; therefore I ^dshow myself unto you.

14 Behold, I am he who was ^aprepared from the foundation of the world to ^bredeem my people. Behold, I am Jesus Christ. I am the ^cFather and the Son. In me shall all mankind have ^dlife, and that eternally, even they who shall believe on my name; and they shall become my ^esons and my daughters.

15 And never have I ^ashowed myself (Jesus is showing him His body in the future that He will take upon Himself. With God, all time is present. Jesus' body could have been His resurrected body which He was showing Mahonri. Since he mentions that he saw His finger which had flesh and blood, maybe this vision occurred to Jesus while He was on the Mount of Transfiguration in His transfigured state while Jared was in his time on the mountain. Speculation.) unto man whom I have created, (Jeffrey R. Holland: "The potential for confusion here comes with the realization that many (and perhaps all) of the major prophets living prior to the brother of Jared had seen God. How, then, do we account for the Lord's declaration? . . .before the time of the brother of Jared, the Lord did appear to Adam and 'the residue of his posterity who were righteous' in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman three years before Adam's death (D&C 107:53). And we are left with Enoch, who said explicitly, 'I saw the Lord; and he stood before my face, and he talked with me, even as a man talketh one with another, face to face.' (Moses 7:4) We assume that other prophets between the Fall and the Tower of Babel saw God in a similar manner, including Noah, who 'found grace in the eyes of the Lord' and 'walked with God,' (Gen 6:8-9) the same scriptural phrase used to describe Enoch's relationship with the Lord. (Gen 5:24) This issue has been much discussed by Latter-day Saint writers, and there are several possible explanations, any one—or all—of which may cast light upon the larger truth of this passage. Nevertheless, without additional revelation or commentary on the matter, any conjecture is only that and as such is inadequate and incomplete. One possibility is . . .that the reference to 'man' is the key to this passage, suggesting that the Lord had never revealed himself to the unsanctified, to the nonbeliever, to temporal, earthy, natural man. The implication is that only those who have put off the natural man, only those who are untainted by the world—in short, the sanctified (such as Adam, Enoch, and now the brother of Jared)—are entitled to this privilege. Some believe that the Lord meant he had never before revealed himself to man in that degree or to that extent. This theory suggests that divine appearances to earlier prophets had not been

with the same 'fulness,' that never before had the veil been lifted to give such a complete revelation of Christ's nature and being... A final explanation—and in terms of the brother of Jared's faith the most persuasive one—is that **Christ was saying to the brother of Jared, 'Never have I showed myself unto man in this manner, without my volition, driven solely by the faith of the beholder.'** As a rule, prophets are invited into the presence of the Lord, are bidden to enter his presence by him and only with his sanction. The brother of Jared, on the other hand, seems to have thrust himself through the veil, not as an unwelcome guest but perhaps technically as an uninvited one. Said Jehovah, 'Never has man come before me with such exceeding faith as thou hast; for were it not so ye could not have seen my finger. . . . Never has man believed in me as thou hast.' (v. 9,15) **Obviously the Lord himself was linking unprecedented faith with this unprecedented vision.** If the vision itself was not unique, then it had to be the faith and how the vision was obtained that was so unparalleled. The only way that faith could be so remarkable was its ability to take the prophet, uninvited, where others had been able to go only with God's bidding. That appears to be Moroni's understanding of the circumstance when he later wrote, 'Because of the knowledge [which came as a result of faith] of this man he could not be kept from beholding within the veil. . . . Wherefore, having this perfect knowledge of God, he could not be kept from within the veil; therefore he saw Jesus.' (v. 19)" (Christ And The New Covenant, p. 21-23) This is a difficult statement. It is hard to fathom. It is particularly difficult to reconcile with what we know regarding God's dealings with the ancient prophets. We know that all revelation since the fall of Adam has been by and through Jehovah, who is Jesus Christ, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of the fathers. Whenever Elohim our Heavenly Father did manifest himself it was to introduce and bear record of the Son (see Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation 1:27; Man: His Origin and Destiny, pp. 304, 312; Answers to Gospel Questions 3:58). Thus it is that the Lord Jehovah—often speaking in the name of and on behalf of the Eternal Father (see Commentary 2:227-29)—appeared to and conversed with Adam, Seth, Enoch, Noah, and surely others of whom we have no specific record. Why, then, would Jehovah say: "Never have I showed myself unto man"? We are unaware of a final and conclusive answer anywhere in our literature, but we offer the following possibilities, principles which are not necessarily mutually exclusive and, for all we know, may all serve as correct answers to the question at hand. First, perhaps the Lord was speaking of the total and complete manner in which he revealed himself to the brother of Jared. President Joseph Fielding Smith explained: "I have always considered Ether 3:15 to mean that the Savior stood before the brother of Jared plainly, distinctly, and showed him his whole body and explained to him that he was a spirit. In his appearance to Adam and Enoch, he had not made himself manifest in such a familiar way. His appearance to earlier prophets had not been with that same fulness. . . . For the brother of Jared he removed the veil completely." (Doctrines of Salvation 1:37; see also Bruce R. McConkie, Promised Messiah, pp. 47, 599-600.) Second, Sidney B. Sperry suggested that the Lord's statement may have to do with the principle that he does not reveal himself to men, (meaning "sons of men," unbelieving men); he only reveals himself to believers, to those who trust in and rely on him, who, like Moriancumer, become redeemed from the Fall (see Answers to Book of Mormon Questions, p. 49). Third, Daniel H. Ludlow has written: "Another possible interpretation is that Jesus Christ ... is essentially saying in Ether 3:15 that he has never had to show himself unto man before. This interpretation gains additional weight when considered in connection with the following verses: Ether 3:9, 19-20, 26. In these verses the Lord makes it very clear that the brother of Jared came before him with greater faith than any other man (Ether 3:9), that the brother of Jared 'could not be kept from within the veil' (Ether 3:20), and that the Lord 'could not withhold anything from him, for he knew that the Lord could show him all things' (Ether 3:26). (A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon, p. 318.) Fourth, President Harold B. Lee suggested that the uniqueness of Moriancumer's experience lay in the fact that he saw the Lord Jesus as he would be, that is, he saw a vision of Christ as his body would be during his mortal ministry in some two thousand years. "He saw the finger of the Lord," President Lee observed, "as he touched each of those sixteen stones, and they were luminous. And then he was amazed because he said he saw not only the

finger of a spiritual being, but his faith was so great that he saw the kind of a body that he would have when he came down to the earth. It was of flesh and blood-flesh, blood, and bones. And the Master said, 'No man has had this kind of faith.' " ("To Be on Speaking Terms with God," pp. 8-9.) Support for this interpretation may come from the Savior: "Because of thy faith thou hast seen that I shall take upon me flesh and blood" (verse 9). Also consider the following words of Moroni:: "Jesus showed himself unto this man in the spirit, even after the manner and in the likeness of the same body even as he showed himself unto the Nephites. And he ministered unto him even as he ministered unto the Nephites." (Verses 17-18.) Fifth, we might ponder upon another possibility. It may be that this is the first occasion in history-it seems to be the first, according to our present scriptural records-when Jehovah manifested himself as Jesus Christ, the Son. Before this time he had made himself known by speaking to such persons as Adam (Moses 6), Enoch (Moses 6-7), and Noah (Moses 8) in the language and person of the Father, by divine investiture of authority. In other words, this may be the first occasion wherein Jehovah introduced himself as Jesus the Son of God rather than speaking about himself in the third person, as he had done many times before. Finally, perhaps the matter is simpler than we had supposed. Could it be that the pronouncement is a relative statement, that it pertains only to the Jaredites? That is, it may be that Jehovah was explaining, in essence, "Never before have I showed myself to anyone in your dispensation, the Jaredite dispensation." DCBM, 4:276-78) for never has man ^bbelieved in me as thou hast. Seest thou that ye are created after mine own ^cimage? Yea, even all men were created in the beginning after mine own image. (Here Jehovah speaks in broad terms and by divine investiture of authority. Jehovah was, under the direction and by appointment of the Father, the executive in the creation. He created all things on earth, except man. "When it came to placing man on earth, there was a change in Creators. That is, the Father himself became personally involved. All things were created by the Son, using the power delegated by the Father, except man. In the spirit and again in the flesh, man was created by the Father. There was no delegation of authority where the crowning creature of creation was concerned." (Bruce R. McConkie, Promised Messiah, p. 62; see also New Witness, p. 63) DCBM, 4:278)

16 Behold, this ^abody, which ye now ^bbehold, is the ^cbody of my ^dspirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit; and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh.

17 And now, as I, Moroni, said I could ^anot make a full account of these things which are written, therefore it sufficeth me to say that Jesus showed himself unto this man in the spirit, even after the manner and in the likeness of the same body even as he ^bshowed himself unto the Nephites.

18 And he ministered unto him even as he ministered unto the Nephites; and all this, that this man might know that he was God, because of the many great works which the Lord had showed unto him.

19 And because of the ^aknowledge of this man he could not be kept from beholding within the ^bveil; and he saw the finger of Jesus, which, when he saw, he fell with fear; for he knew that it was the finger of the Lord; and he had ^cfaith no longer, for he knew, nothing ^ddoubting. (From an eternal perspective, knowledge and faith are not antithetical, nor are they on opposite ends of a continuum. God possesses all knowledge and God possesses all faith. Indeed, it is by virtue of his faith, existing in him in perfection as a principle of power, that the worlds were made (see Hebrews 11:3; Lectures on Faith 1-2). Elder Bruce R. McConkie has written: "In the eternal sense, because faith is the power of God himself, it embraces within its fold a knowledge of all things. This measure of faith, the faith by which the worlds are and were created and which sustains and upholds all things, is found only among resurrected persons. It is the faith of saved beings. But mortals are in process, through faith, of gaining eternal salvation. Their faith is based on a knowledge of the truth, within the meaning of Alma's statement that 'faith is not to have a perfect knowledge of things,' but that men have faith when they 'hope for things which are not seen, which are true.' In this sense faith is both preceded and supplanted by knowledge, and when any person gains a perfect knowledge on any given matter, then, as pertaining to that thing, he has faith no longer; or, rather, his faith is dormant; it has been supplanted by pure knowledge..... The brother of

Jared stands out as a good illustration of how the knowledge of God is gained by faith, and also of how that perfect knowledge, from a mortal perspective, replaces faith." (New Witness, pp. 209-10, 211.) DCBM, 4:278-79)

20 Wherefore, having this perfect knowledge of God, he could ^anot be kept from within the veil; therefore he ^bsaw Jesus; and he did minister unto him. (The brother of Jared enjoyed the blessing of the Second Comforter, the personal presence and ministration of the Lord God himself.)

21 And it came to pass that the Lord said unto the brother of Jared: Behold, thou shalt not suffer these things which ye have seen and heard to go forth unto the world, (Seal up the vision) until the ^atime cometh that I shall glorify my name in the flesh; (The vision can't be revealed until after Christ's resurrection.) wherefore, ye shall ^btreasure up the things which ye have seen and heard, and show it to no man.

22 And behold, when ye shall come unto me, ye shall write them and shall seal them up, that no one can interpret them; for ye shall write them in a ^alanguage that they cannot be read.

23 And behold, these ^atwo stones (Urim and Thummim. These are the same stones given to Joseph Smith to translate the plates.) will I give unto thee, and ye shall seal them up also with the things which ye shall write.

24 For behold, the ^alanguage which ye shall write I have confounded; wherefore I will cause in my own due time that these stones (Bruce R. McConkie: "Joseph Smith received the same Urim and Thummim had by the Brother of Jared for it was the one expressly provided for the translation of the Jaredite and Nephite records. (D. & C. 10:1; 17:1; Ether 3:22-28.) It was separate and distinct from the one had by Abraham and the one had by the priests in Israel. The Prophet also had a seer stone which was separate and distinct from the Urim and Thummim, and which (speaking loosely) has been called by some a Urim and Thummim. (Doctrines of Salvation, vol. 3, pp. 222-226.) "President Joseph Fielding Smith, with reference to the seer stone and the Urim and Thummim, has written: 'We have been taught since the days of the Prophet that the Urim and Thummim were returned with the plates to the angel. We have no record of the Prophet having the Urim and Thummim after the organization of the Church.' (Mormon Doctrine, p. 818)) shall magnify to the eyes of men these things which ye shall write.

25 And when the Lord had said these words, he ^ashowed unto the brother of Jared ^ball the inhabitants of the earth which had been, and also all that would be; and he ^cwithheld them not from his sight, even unto the ends of the earth. (The brother of Jared was granted a panoramic vision, that vision which the scriptures tell us has been given to prophet-leaders of dispensations, a vision of things from the beginning to the end. This he was instructed to seal up; it constitutes or is included in what we know as the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon. This "sealed book" is described in Nephi's record as containing "a revelation from God, from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof." When it comes forth it will "reveal all things from the foundation of the world unto the end thereof." (2 Nephi 27:7, 10.) When during the Millennium [see 2 Nephi 27:11; Ether 4:7, 15], the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon is translated, it will give an account of life in preexistence; of the creation of all things; of the Fall and the Atonement and the Second Coming; of temple ordinances in their fulness; of the ministry and mission of translated beings; of life in the spirit world, in both paradise and hell; of the kingdoms of glory to be inhabited by resurrected beings, and many such things" (Bruce R. McConkie, Doctrines of the Restoration, p. 277). DCBM, 4:280)

26 For he had said unto him in times before, that ^aif he would ^bbelieve in him that he could show unto him ^call things—it should be shown unto him; therefore the Lord could not withhold anything from him, for he knew that the Lord could show him all things.

27 And the Lord said unto him: Write these things and ^aseal them up; and I will show them in mine own due time unto the children of men. (Joseph Fielding Smith: "Now the Lord has placed us on probation as members of the Church. He has given us the Book of Mormon, which is the lesser part, to build up our faith through our obedience to the counsels which it contains, and when we ourselves, members of the Church, are willing to keep the commandments as they have been given to us and show our faith as the

Nephites did for a short period of time, then the Lord is ready to bring forth the other record and give it to us, but we are not ready now to receive it. Why? Because we have not lived up to the requirements in this probationary state in the reading of the record which had been given to us and in the following its counsels.” (Conference Report, Oct. 1961, p. 20))

28 And it came to pass that the Lord commanded him that he should seal up the two ^astones which he had received, and show them not, until the Lord should show them unto the children of ^bmen.

Ether 4

Moroni is commanded to seal up the writings of the brother of Jared—They shall not be revealed until men have faith even as the brother of Jared—Christ commands men to believe his words and those of his disciples—Men are commanded to repent and believe the gospel and be saved.

1 AND the Lord commanded the brother of Jared to go down out of the ^amount from the presence of the Lord, and ^bwrite the things which he had seen; and they were forbidden to come unto the children of men ^cuntil after that he should be lifted up upon the cross; and for this cause did king Mosiah keep them, that they should not come unto the world until after Christ should show himself unto his people.

2 And after Christ truly had showed himself unto his people he commanded that they should be made manifest. (After the Savior’s visit, the vision of the brother of Jared was made known to the Nephites because they were such a righteous people for two hundred years.)

3 And now, after that, they have all dwindled in unbelief; and there is ^anone save it be the Lamanites, and they have rejected the gospel of Christ; therefore I am commanded that I should ^bhide them up again in the earth.

4 Behold, I have written upon these plates the ^avery things which the brother of Jared saw (Moroni got to read the brother of Jared’s vision); and there never were ^bgreater things made manifest than those which were made manifest unto the brother of Jared. (Bruce R. McConkie: “Even the true saints—the believing disciples, those who have accepted the gospel and received the gift of the Holy Ghost—are not prepared to receive all things. We have the fulness of the everlasting gospel, meaning we have every truth, power, priesthood, and key needed to enable us to gain the fulness of salvation in our Father’s kingdom. But we do not have, and are not yet prepared to receive, the fulness of gospel truth. This is perfectly illustrated by the fact that we do not have the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon. That treasure-house of Holy Writ contains an account of the creation of the world, of the dealings of God with men in all ages, of the Second Coming of the Son of Man, and of the millennial era when the earth shall rest and Zion prosper to the full – all of which we are not prepared to receive. The doctrines revealed to the brother of Jared, and which are recorded in the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon, were had among the Jaredites; they were known to the Nephites during their Golden Era; certainly they were known and taught in Enoch’s Zion; but when the Lehite people ‘dwindled in unbelief,’ Moroni was commanded to ‘hide them up.’” (Mortal Messiah, Book 2, p. 237) Neal A. Maxwell: “The sealed portion yet to come forth will be very valuable. (3 Nephi 26:10-11.) In fact, this sweeping portion will contain ‘a revelation from God, from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof’ (2 Nephi 27:7, 10-11). Such a cumulative record yet to be revealed is something to be awaited with ‘anxious expectation’ in that ‘time to come in the which nothing shall be withheld,’ as the Prophet Joseph was promised in the prison-temple (D&C 121:27-28).” (But For a Small Moment, p. 37))

5 Wherefore the Lord hath commanded me to write them; and I have written them. And he commanded me that I should ^aseal them up; (“Moroni wrote his account of the vision of the brother of Jared on the plates of Mormon, but he was commanded by the Lord to ‘seal up’ this account. (Ether 4:4-5.) Joseph Smith was commanded not to translate this sealed portion. It is not absolutely clear what portion of the plates of Mormon was sealed. Joseph Smith simply said: ‘The volume was something near six inches in thickness, a part of which was sealed.’ (History of the Church, 4:537.) George Q. Cannon said that

‘about one-third’ was sealed (Young Peoples' History of Joseph Smith, p. 25), whereas Orson Pratt maintained that the sealed portion comprised ‘about two-thirds’ of the plates. (Journal of Discourses, 3:347.) Neither of these two brethren indicate where they obtained their information.” (Daniel H. Ludlow, A Companion To Your Study of the Book of Mormon, p. 320) and he also hath commanded that I should seal up the interpretation thereof; wherefore I have sealed up the ^binterpreters, according to the commandment of the Lord. (George Q. Cannon said that “about one-third” was sealed, whereas, Orson Pratt maintained that the sealed portion comprised “about two-thirds: of the plates. JD, 3:347, Daniel L. Ludlow, A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon, 320)

6 For the Lord said unto me: They shall (the sealed portion) not go forth unto the Gentiles until the day that they shall repent of their iniquity, and become clean before the Lord. (If we are sufficiently righteous, we, too, may read the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon and read the vision of the brother of Jared.)

7 And in that day (The Millennium) that they shall exercise ^afaith in me, saith the Lord, even as the brother of Jared did, that they may become ^bsanctified in me, then will I ^cmanifest unto them the things which the brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my ^drevelations, saith Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the ^eFather of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are. (Kenneth W. Anderson: Now, since the brother of Jared and "many" others obtained sanctification, which was their key to great knowledge, eternal life and the presence of God, how can we obtain the same today? The use of the word "unfolding" (Ether 4:7) verifies an orderly gaining of faith and gradual sanctification process. Learning to live the principles of the gospel and receive instructive revelation from the Holy Ghost does not happen all at once. It is a growing and maturing process just as it was for the brother of Jared. However, the same sanctifying and revelatory process is available to the Saints today. For "he that believeth these things which I have spoken, him will I visit with the manifestations of my Spirit, and he shall know and bear record. For because of my Spirit he shall know that these things are true" (v 11). The Book of Mormon: Fourth Nephi through Moroni, from Zion to Destruction, 38. Bruce R. McConkie: “From these revelations we learn that there are no limitations placed upon any of us. Revelations are not reserved for a limited few or for those called to positions of importance in the Church. It is not position in the Church that confers spiritual gifts. It is not being a bishop, a stake president, or an apostle that makes revelation and salvation available. These are high and holy callings which open the door to the privilege of great service among men. But it is not a call to a special office that opens the windows of revelation to a truth seeker. Rather it is personal righteousness; it is keeping the commandments; it is seeking the Lord while he may be found. God is no respecter of persons. He will give revelation to me and to you on the same terms and conditions. I can see what Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon saw in the vision of the degrees of glory -- and so can you. I can entertain angels and see God, I can receive an outpouring of the gifts of the Spirit -- and so can you.” (Conference Report, Oct. 1969, p. 82) Anthony W. Ivins: “This sealed portion of the record which came into the hands of Joseph Smith but was not translated by him so far as we are aware, the abridgment made by Mormon, the record of Ether, and the other sacred records which were deposited in the Hill Cumorah, still lie in their repository, awaiting the time when the Lord shall see fit to bring them forth, that they may be published to the world. Whether they have been removed from the spot where Mormon deposited them we cannot tell, but this we know, that they are safe under the guardianship of the Lord, and that they will be brought forth at the proper time as the Lord has declared they should be, for the benefit and blessing of the people of the world, for his word never fails.” (Conference Report, Apr. 1928, p. 15))

8 And he that will ^acontend against the word of the Lord, let him be accursed; and he that shall ^bdeny these things, let him be accursed; for unto them will I show ^cno greater things, saith Jesus Christ; for I am he who speaketh. (Bruce R. McConkie: “How can those who do not believe and obey the law already given ever expect to receive more revelation from on high? If men will not believe the Book of Mormon, they shut out of their lives the other revelations that have come in this dispensation. And if they do not believe all that God has now revealed, what justification would there be for him to reveal

other great and important things pertaining to his earthly affairs and his heavenly kingdom?” (Mortal Messiah, Book 4, p. 371))

9 And at my command the heavens are opened and are ^ashut; and at my word the ^bearth shall shake; and at my command the inhabitants thereof shall pass away, even so as by fire.

10 And he that believeth not my words believeth not my disciples; and if it so be that I do not speak, judge ye; for ye shall know that it is I that speaketh, at the ^alast day.

11 But he that ^abelieveth these things which I have spoken, him will I visit with the manifestations of my Spirit, and he shall ^bknow and bear record. For because of my Spirit he shall ^cknow that these things are ^dtrue; for it persuadeth men to do good. (Dallin H. Oaks: “...a manifestation of the Holy Ghost...is given to acquaint sincere seekers with the truth about the Lord and his gospel. For example, the prophet Moroni promises that when we study the Book of Mormon and seek to know whether it is true, sincerely and with real intent, God will ‘manifest’ the truth of it unto us, ‘by the power of the Holy Ghost’ (Moro. 10:4). Moroni also records this promise from the Risen Lord: ‘He that believeth these things which I have spoken, him will I visit with the manifestations of my Spirit, and he shall know and bear record. For because of my Spirit he shall know that these things are true’ (Ether 4:11). These manifestations are available to everyone. The Book of Mormon declares that the Savior ‘manifesteth himself unto all those who believe in him, by the power of the Holy Ghost; yea, unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people’ (2 Ne. 26:13). “ (Conference Report, Nov. 1996 Ensign, “Always Have His Spirit”))

12 And whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do good is of me; for ^agood cometh of none save it be of me. I am the same that leadeth men to all good; he that will ^bnot believe my words will not believe me—that I am; and he that will not believe me will not believe the Father who sent me. For behold, I am the Father, (Bruce R. McConkie: “In the usual manner of speaking, the Father and the Son are two separate personages who are united as one in purpose and plan and in character and attributes. Christ is the Firstborn spirit offspring of the Father in pre-existence, the Only Begotten in the flesh. But there are three specific scriptural senses in which Christ is spoken of and known as the Father: (1) He is the Father in the sense of being the Creator and is thus referred to as ‘the Father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are.’ (Ether 4:7.) (2) He is the Father of those who abide in his gospel. Faithful saints who receive him have power given them to become his sons. (D. & C. 39:4.) Those who are ‘spiritually begotten... are born of him’; they become ‘the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters.’ (Mosiah 5:7.) (3) He is the Father by divine investiture of authority. That is, the Father places his own name, power, authority, and Godship on the Son, and empowers him to act and speak in the first person as though he were the Father so that his words and acts become and are those of the Father. All things are truly delivered to him by his Father.” Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 1:468)) I am the ^clight, and the ^dlife, and the ^etruth of the world.

13 ^aCome unto me, O ye Gentiles, and I will show unto you the greater things, the knowledge which is hid up because of unbelief. (Orson Pratt: “‘Come unto me, O ye Gentiles, and I will shew unto you the greater things...[quotes verses 13-19] I have felt disposed to read these paragraphs, for I highly esteem the Book of Mormon, as I presume do all the Latter-day Saints. But many lay it upon the shelf and let it remain there for a year or two, consequently they become careless concerning the dealings of the Lord with the Former-day Saints. You are not to suppose that you are going to be jumped into the midst of revelations, and by one great and grand step are to burst the vail, and to rend it from your eyes, do you think that you are to step into the celestial kingdom and see it all at once? No, these blessings are by far too precious to be attained in such a way; they are to be attained by diligence and faith from day to day, and from night to night. Hence you are to become habituated to do good in your thoughts and conduct, in all that you do, until you become perfectly initiated into the great principles of righteousness, and continue to live uprightly until it becomes a kind of second nature to be honest, to be prudent, to govern all your passions, and bring all of the influences of the flesh, of the fallen nature, into the most perfect subjection to the law of God.” (Journal of Discourses, 3:348))

14 Come unto me, O ye house of Israel, and it shall be made ^amanifest unto you how great things the

Father hath laid up for you, from the foundation of the world; and it hath not come unto you, because of unbelief.

15 Behold, when ye (us in our day) shall rend that veil of unbelief (It's up to us to increase our faith.) which doth cause you to remain in your awful state of wickedness, and hardness of heart, and blindness of mind, then shall the great and marvelous things which have been ^ahid up from the foundation of the world from you—yea, when ye shall ^bcall upon the Father in my name, with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, then shall ye know that the Father hath remembered the covenant which he made unto your fathers, O house of Israel.

16 And then shall my ^arevelations which I have caused to be written by my servant John (The Book of Revelation will be easier to understand someday) be unfolded in the eyes of all the people. (Neal A. Maxwell: "Many more scriptural writings will yet come to us, including those of Enoch (see D&C 107:57), all of the writings of the Apostle John (see Ether 4:16), the records of the lost tribes of Israel (see 2 Nephi 29:13), and the approximately two-thirds of the Book of Mormon plates that were sealed: 'And the day cometh that the words of the book which were sealed shall be read upon the house tops; and they shall be read by the power of Christ; and all things shall be revealed unto the children of men which ever have been among the children of men, and which ever will be even unto the end of the earth' (2 Nephi 27:11). Today we carry convenient quadruple combinations of the scriptures, but one day, since more scriptures are coming, we may need to pull little red wagons brimful with books." (A Wonderful Flood of Light, p. 18) Hugh Nibley: "John enjoys a special place in the Book of Mormon, where he is the only future prophet mentioned by name. His special office, however, is not to serve as a prophet so much as a recorder. It is John, the man in the white robe whom Nephi sees in a vision, who is to write the fullest record of the Lord's ministry (1 Nephi 14:19-25) and the accurate setting forth of his words as they proceeded out of his mouth, 'plain and pure, and most precious and easy to understand of all men' (1 Nephi 14:23); but his record and those of others to whom the Lord 'hath shown all things' are to be 'sealed up to come forth in their purity' after the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon--hence Nephi was forbidden to write them (1 Nephi 14:25-26). When the Book of Mormon has been brought forth and introduced to the house of Israel, then shall they 'know that the work of the Father has commenced upon all the face of the land' (Ether 4:17), and when the people begin to believe, 'then shall my revelations which I have caused to be written by my servant John be unfolded in the eyes of all the people;. . . the time is at hand that they shall be made manifest in very deed' (Ether 4:16)." (Since Cumorah, p. 206)) Remember, when ye see these things, ye shall know that the time is at hand that they shall be made manifest in very deed.

17 Therefore, ^awhen ye shall receive this record ye may know that the work of the Father has commenced upon all the face of the land.

18 Therefore, ^arepent all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me, and believe in my gospel, and be ^bbaptized in my name; for he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned; and ^csigns shall follow them that believe in my name.

19 And blessed is he that is found ^afaithful unto my name at the last day, for he shall be ^blifted up to dwell in the kingdom prepared for him ^cfrom the foundation of the world. And behold it is I that hath spoken it. Amen.

Ether 5

Three witnesses and the work itself shall stand as a testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. (This chapter is an epistle written to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Moroni interrupted the story of Jaredite travel and settlement in the land of promise by inserting some direct and personal instructions to the future translator of the record he had produced. Moroni warned him not to touch the portion of the record that was sealed up unless God so commanded him. (Ether 5:1.) According to Moroni, the sealed portion contained "the very things which the brother of Jared saw" (Ether 4:4) on Mount Shelem; in

particular "all the inhabitants of the earth which had been, and also all that would be; and he withheld them not from his sight, even unto the ends of the earth" (Ether 3:25). These are some of the things other great prophet-patriarchs have also viewed, as attested to by Enoch (Moses 6:36), Abraham (Abr. 3:22), Moses (Moses 1:8, 28), and even our first father, Adam (D&C 107:56). Andrew Skinner, *Studies in Scripture*, p. 260)

1 AND now I, Moroni, have written the words which were commanded me, according to my memory; and I have told you the things which I have ^asealed up; therefore touch them not in order that ye may translate; for that thing is forbidden you, except by and by it shall be wisdom in God. (Bruce R. McConkie: "It was returned by Joseph Smith to Moroni, its divinely appointed custodian. Nor did even Joseph Smith either read or translate it. [The sealed portion of the plates.] We know of no one among mortals since Mormon and Moroni who have known its contents. It was known among the Nephites during the nearly two hundred years of their Golden Era. But for the present, the book is kept from us; only the portion upon which no seal was placed has been translated." (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, p. 443 as taken from Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 493))

2 And behold, ye may be privileged that ye may show the plates unto ^athose who shall assist to bring forth this work; (the 8 witnesses)

3 And unto ^athree (the 3 witnesses) shall they be shown by the power of God; wherefore they shall ^bknow of a surety that these things are ^ctrue. (Joseph Smith: "In the course of the work of translation, we ascertained that three special witnesses were to be provided by the Lord, to whom He would grant that they should see the plates from which this work (the Book of Mormon) should be translated; and that these witnesses should bear record of the same, as will be found recorded, Book of Mormon, page 581 [Book of Ether, chapter 5, verses 2, 3 and 4, p. 487, edition 1920], also page 86 [II Nephi, chapter 11, verse 3, p. 73, edition 1920]. Almost immediately after we had made this discovery, it occurred to Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer and the aforementioned Martin Harris (who had come to inquire after our progress in the work) that they would have me inquire of the Lord to know if they might not obtain of him the privilege to be these three special witnesses; and finally they became so very solicitous, and urged me so much to inquire that at length I complied; and through the Urim and Thummim, I obtained of the Lord for them the following: (D&C 17) 'Behold, I say unto you, that you must rely upon my word, which if you do with full purpose of heart, you shall have a view of the plates, and also the breastplate, the sword of Laban, the Urim and Thummim, which were given to the brother of Jared upon the mount, when he talked with the Lord face to face, and the miraculous directors which were given to Lehi while in the wilderness, on the borders of the Red Sea. And it is by your faith that you shall obtain a view of them, even by that faith which was had by the prophets of old. And after that you have obtained faith, and have seen them with your eyes, you shall testify of them, by the power of God.'" (History of the Church, 1:52-53, see also D&C 17:1-3))

4 And in the mouth of three ^awitnesses (Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote: Whenever the Lord has established a dispensation by revealing his gospel and by conferring priesthood and keys upon men, he has acted in accordance with the law of witnesses which he himself ordained. This law is: "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." (2. Cor. 13:1; Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Matt. 18:15-16; John 8:12-29.) Never does a prophet stand alone in establishing a new dispensation of revealed truth, or in carrying the burden of such a message and warning to the world. In every dispensation, from Adam's to the present, two or more witnesses have joined their testimonies, thus leaving their hearers without excuse in the day of judgment should the testimony be rejected. MD, p. 436, Andrew Skinner, *Studies in Scripture*, 8:263) shall these things be established; and the ^btestimony of three, and this work (The book is a testimony, also), in the which shall be shown forth the power of God and also his word, of which the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost bear record—and all this shall stand as a testimony against the world at the last day. (Joseph Smith: "...we beheld a light above us in the air, of exceeding

brightness; and behold, an angel stood before us. In his hands he held the plates which we had been praying for these to have a view of. He turned over the leaves one by one, so that we could see them, and discern the engravings thereon distinctly. He then addressed himself to David Whitmer, and said, 'David, blessed is the Lord, and he that keeps His commandments;' when, immediately afterwards, we heard a voice from out of the bright light above us, saying, 'These plates have been revealed by the power of God, and they have been translated by the power of God. The translation of them which you have seen is correct, and I command you to bear record of what you now see and hear.'" (History of the Church, 1:54-55) Testimony of the Three Witnesses: "...we...have seen the plates...And we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true. And it is marvelous in our eyes..." Orson Pratt: "...the Lord confirmed the truth of the Book of Mormon unto many witnesses in such a way, and by such means, that it was impossible for them to have been deceived;...the testimony of these witnesses stands good until it can be refuted; [and] no man can be justified in rejecting this testimony until he can show that it is false...Now, no one has ever attempted to bring any direct negative testimony; this, indeed, would be impossible, unless the witnesses themselves should deny their former testimony, and this they have not done. And those who have attempted to condemn their testimony from the nature of the message itself, have only exhibited their own weakness and folly. Upwards of twenty years (now 170 yrs.) have passed away, and no man has, as yet, been found able to prove the Book of Mormon or the testimony of its witnesses false." (Pamphlet: "Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon," p. 65) One day in June 1829, Mary [Whitmer] was going out to milk the cows and to her great surprise was met by the Angel Moroni. He said to her, "You have been very faithful and diligent in your labors, but you are tired . . . it is proper therefore that you should receive a witness that your faith may be strengthened." Thereupon, the messenger showed Mary the plates, turning them over leaf by leaf, that she might know that the work was true. He promised her that if she endured in faith to the end, her reward would be sure. Witness of the Light: A Photographic Journey in the Footsteps of the American Prophet Joseph Smith, Maurine Jensen Proctor, Scot Facer Proctor, Chapter 2. The following replies are taken from the better recorded interviews of about the last decade of his life. Since these responses can be documented in multiple situations, such a composite interview gives a fair idea of the impact of a private talk with David Whitmer. Q: Is your published testimony accurate? A: "As you read my testimony given many years ago, so it stands as my own existence, the same as when I gave it, and so shall stand throughout the cycles of eternity." Q: When did this event take place? A: "It was in June, 1829, the very last part of the month Q: What was the approximate time of day? A: "It was about 11 A.M." Q: What were the circumstances of the vision? A: "[We] went out into the woods nearby, and sat down on a log and talked awhile. We then kneeled down and prayed. Joseph prayed, We then got up and sat on the log and were talking, when all at once a light came down from above us and encircled us for quite a little distance around, and the angel stood before us." Q: Describe the angel. A: "He was dressed in white, and spoke and called me by name and said, 'Blessed is he that keepeth His commandments.' This is all that I heard the angel say Q: Did the angel have the Book of Mormon plates? A: "[He] showed to us the plates, the sword of Laban, the Directors, the Urim and Thummim, and other records. Human language could not describe heavenly things and that which we saw." Q: Did the vision take place under natural circumstances? A: "The fact is, it was just as though Joseph, Oliver and I were sitting right here on a log, when we were overshadowed by a light. It was not like the light of the sun, nor like that of a fire, but more glorious and beautiful. It extended away round us, I cannot tell how far, but in the midst of this light, immediately before us, about as far off as he sits (pointing to John C. Whitmer, who was sitting 2

or 3 feet from him) there appeared, as it were, a table, with many records on it—besides the plates of the Book of Mormon, also the sword of Laban, the Directors, and the Interpreters. I saw them as plain as I see this bed (striking his hand upon the bed beside him), and I heard the voice of the Lord as distinctly as I ever heard anything in my life declaring that they were translated by the gift and power of God. Q: Can you explain the supernatural power that surrounded you? A: "All of a sudden I beheld a dazzlingly brilliant light that surpassed in brightness even the sun at noonday, and which seemed to envelop the woods for a considerable distance around. Simultaneous with the light came a strange entrancing influence which permeated me so powerfully that I felt chained to the spot, while I also experienced a sensation of joy absolutely indescribable." Q: "Did you see the Urim and Thummim?" A: "I saw the Interpreters in the holy vision; they looked like whitish stones put in the rim of a bow—looked like spectacles, only much larger." Q: Did you see an actual table? A: "You see that small table by the wall? . . . Well, there was a table about that size, and the heavenly messenger brought the several plates and laid them on the table before our eyes, and we saw them. Q: Did you handle the plates? A: "I did not handle the plates—only saw them. Joseph, and I think Oliver and Emma told me about the plates, and described them to me, and I believed them, but did not see except at the time testified of." Q: How clearly could you see the plates? A: "[T]he angel stood before us, and he turned the leaves one by one." [H]e held the plates and turned them over with his hands, so that they could be plainly visible." Q: "Did the angel turn all the leaves before you as you looked on it?" A: "No, not all, only that part of the book which was not sealed, and what there was sealed appeared as solid to my view as wood." Q: "Can you describe the plates?" A: "They appeared to be of gold, about six by nine inches in size, about as thick as parchment, a great many in number and bound together like the leaves of a book by massive rings passing through the back edges. The engraving upon them was very plain and of very curious appearance." Q: Is it possible that you imagined this experience? A: "[O]ur testimony is true. And if these things are not true, then there is no truth; and if there is no truth, there is no God; and if there is no God, there is no existence. But I know there is a God, for I have heard His voice and witnessed the manifestation of his power." Q: "Do you remember the peculiar sensation experienced upon that occasion?" A: "Yes, I remember it very distinctly. And I never think of it, from that day to this, but what that spirit is present with me." Investigating the Book of Mormon Witnesses, Richard Lloyd Anderson, Chapter 6.)

5 And if it so be that they repent and ^acome unto the Father in the name of Jesus, they shall be received into the kingdom of God.

6 And now, if I have no authority for these things, judge ye; for ye shall know that I have authority when ye shall see me, and we shall stand before God at the last day. Amen. (Bruce R. McConkie: "Though men may reject the teachings of the apostles and prophets concerning Jesus Christ and his gospel, yet those very teachings shall rise to condemn the unbelievers in the day of judgment. That is, the words of the apostles and prophets shall stand as a testimony against unbelievers at the judgment bar of Christ. (2 Ne. 33:10-14; Moro. 10:27-29, 34.)" (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 1:330))