

LESSON 4
“The Things Which I Saw While I Was Carried Away In The Spirit”
1 Nephi 12-14

OVERVIEW:

Nephi sees the future of his and his brothers’ descendants. He sees the formation of the great and abominable church, the colonization of the Americas, the Apostasy, and the Restoration of the Gospel. He sees the blessings promised to the faithful and the destruction of the great and abominable church.

SCRIPTURES:

THE FIRST BOOK OF NEPHI
HIS REIGN AND MINISTRY
CHAPTER 12

Nephi sees in vision: the land of promise; the righteousness, iniquity, and downfall of its inhabitants; the coming of the Lamb of God among them; how the twelve disciples and the twelve apostles shall judge Israel; the loathsome and filthy state of those who dwindle in unbelief. [Between 600 and 592 B.C.]

1 AND it came to pass that the angel said unto me: Look, and behold thy seed (The Nephites), and also the seed of thy brethren (The Lamanites). And I looked and beheld the ^aland of promise (The Americas); and I beheld multitudes of people, yea, even as it were in number as many as the ^bsand of the sea.

2 And it came to pass that I beheld multitudes gathered together to battle, one against the other; and I beheld ^awars, and rumors of wars, and great slaughters with the sword among my people.

3 And it came to pass that I beheld many generations pass away, after the manner of wars and contentions in the land; and I beheld many cities, yea, even that I did not number them.

4 And it came to pass that I saw a ^amist of ^bdarkness on the face of the land of promise; and I saw lightnings, and I heard thunderings, and earthquakes, and all manner of tumultuous noises; and I saw the earth and the rocks, that they rent; and I saw mountains tumbling into pieces; (It is a very accurate description of an earthquake that registers eight on the Richter scale, all the details and things that happened. Hugh Nibley, Teachings of the Book of Mormon, 1:191) and I saw the plains of the earth, that they were ^cbroken up; and I saw many cities that they were ^dsunk; and I saw many that they were burned with fire; and I saw many that did tumble to the earth, because of the quaking thereof. (3 Nephi 8)

5 And it came to pass after I saw these things, I saw the ^avapor of darkness, that it passed from off the face of the earth; and behold, I saw multitudes who had not fallen because of the great and terrible judgments of the Lord. (The cataclysms associated with the destruction of the wicked – but a shadow and a type of the final destruction of the ungodly at the Second Coming – are described in detail in 3 Nephi 8.)

6 And I saw the heavens open, and the ^aLamb of God descending out of heaven; and he came down and ^bshowed himself unto them.

7 And I also saw and bear record that the Holy Ghost fell upon ^atwelve others; and they were ordained of God, and chosen.

8 And the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold the Twelve Disciples of the Lamb, who are chosen to minister unto thy seed. (“The Nephite Twelve, though generally designated in the Book of Mormon as disciples, were, or course Apostles in the full and complete sense of the word. They were called, ordained, and ‘sent forth’ to be special witnesses of the name of Christ to the Nephite people. Regarding the manner in which the Nephite Twelve were to bestow the Holy Ghost, the Nephite record attests: ‘And he called them by name, saying: Ye shall call on

the Father in my name, in mighty prayer; and after ye have done this ye shall have power that to him upon whom ye shall lay your hands, ye shall give the Holy Ghost; and in my name shall ye give it, *for thus do mine apostles*' (Moroni 2:2; italics added). Joseph Smith wrote to John Wentworth that the Book of Mormon 'tells us that our Savior made his appearance upon this continent after his resurrection; that He planted the Gospel here in all its fulness, and richness, and power, and blessing; that they had Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers, and Evangelists; the same order, the same priesthood, the same ordinances, gifts, powers, and blessing, as were enjoyed on the eastern continent' (HC 4:538)." (McConkie and Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 1, p. 86))

9 And he said unto me: Thou rememberest the ^aTwelve Apostles of the Lamb? Behold they are they who shall ^bjudge the twelve tribes of Israel; wherefore, the twelve ministers of thy seed shall be judged of them; for ye are of the house of Israel.

10 And these ^atwelve ministers whom thou beholdest shall judge thy seed. And, behold, they are righteous forever; for because of their faith in the Lamb of God their ^bgarments are made white in his blood. (To judge means to pass judgment or to rule.)

11 And the angel said unto me: Look! And I looked, and beheld ^athree generations pass away in righteousness; and their garments were white even like unto the Lamb of God. And the angel said unto me: These are made white in the blood of the Lamb, because of their faith in him.

12 And I, Nephi, also saw many of the ^afourth generation who passed away in righteousness.

13 And it came to pass that I saw the multitudes of the earth gathered together.

14 And the angel said unto me: Behold thy seed, and also the seed of thy brethren.

15 And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the people of my seed gathered together in multitudes ^aagainst the seed of my brethren; and they were gathered together to battle.

16 And the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold the fountain of ^afilthy water which thy father saw; yea, even the ^briver of which he spake; and the depths thereof are the depths of ^chell.

17 And the ^amists of darkness are the temptations of the devil, which ^bblindeth the eyes, and hardeneth the hearts of the children of men, and leadeth them away into ^cbroad roads, that they perish and are lost.

18 And the large and spacious ^abuilding, which thy father saw, is vain ^bimagination (I plead with you young women to please be more accepting of yourselves, including your body shape and style, with a little less longing to look like someone else. Jeffrey R. Holland, *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, p. 29) and the ^cpride of the children of men. And a great and a terrible ^dgulf divideth them; yea, even the word of the ^ejustice of the Eternal God, and the Messiah who is the Lamb of God, of whom the Holy Ghost beareth record, from the beginning of the world until this time, and from this time henceforth and forever.

19 And while the angel spake these words, I beheld and saw that the seed of my brethren did contend against my seed, according to the word of the angel; and because of the pride of my seed, and the ^atemptations of the devil, I beheld that the seed of my brethren did ^boverpower the people of my seed. (In 1 Nephi 2:23 he says, Remember, you have nothing to fear from the Lamanites at all as long as you behave yourselves. They are there to stir you up unto remembrance. Teachings of the Book of Mormon, 1:195)

20 And it came to pass that I beheld, and saw the people of the seed of my brethren that they had overcome my seed; and they went forth in multitudes upon the face of the land.

21 And I saw them gathered together in multitudes; and I saw ^awars and rumors of wars among them; and in wars and rumors of wars I saw ^bmany generations pass away.

22 And the angel said unto me: Behold these shall ^adwindle in unbelief.

23 And it came to pass that I beheld, after they had dwindled in unbelief they became a ^adark, and loathsome, and a ^bfilthy people, full of ^cidleness and all manner of abominations.

CHAPTER 13

Nephi sees in vision: the church of the devil set up among the Gentiles; the discovery and colonizing of America; the loss of many plain and precious parts of the Bible; the resultant state of gentile apostasy; the restoration of the gospel, the coming forth of latter-day scripture, and the building up of Zion. [Between 600 and 592 B.C.] (This vision is of the modern world)

1 AND it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, saying: Look! And I looked and beheld many nations and kingdoms.

2 And the angel said unto me: What beholdest thou? And I said: I behold many ^anations and kingdoms.

3 And he said unto me: These are the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles. (For the Nephites, "Jews" are nationals, persons from the kingdom of Judah. Gentiles are persons from elsewhere. In this sense, the Latter-day Saints are called Gentiles. In this vision the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles are the European nations. DCBM, p. 89. The Gentile nations most frequently alluded to in the writings of Nephi are the Christian nations of Europe and the United States. In most places throughout Nephi's writings the terms *Gentile nations* and *Christian nations* are interchangeable. S. Michael Wilcox, *A Book of Mormon Treasury – Gospel Insights From General Authorities and Religious Educators*, p. 131. The word "Gentile," as used in "Mormon" writings, is not a term of reproach. It comes from "Gentilis," meaning of "of a nation," and is used in sacred history to designate the nations not of Israel. The Latter-day Saints themselves, are Gentiles in part; for while they claim lineal descent from the Hebrew patriarchs, it is mostly through Ephraim, who "mixed himself among the people" (Hosea 7:8)—that is, among the peoples that have furnished proselytes to "Mormonism." As a result of that racial mixture, they also are of Japheth's blood. Orson F. Whitney, *Saturday Night Thoughts*.)

4 And it came to pass that I saw among the nations of the ^aGentiles the formation of a ^bgreat church. (The apostasy occurred in the second century, long before the establishment of the Catholic Church.)

5 And the angel said unto me: Behold the formation of a ^achurch which is most abominable above all other churches, (The great and abominable church, or church of the devil are expressions used to identify all churches or organizations of whatever name or nature – whether political, philosophical, educational, economic, social, fraternal, civic, or religious – God and his laws and thus from salvation in the kingdom of God. Any church or organization of any kind whatever which satisfies the innate religious longings of man and keeps him from coming to the saving truths of Christ and his gospel is therefore not of God. MD, p. 137-8) which ^bslayeth the saints of God, (The church which Nephi saw in vision was apostate Christianity, that which came into being after New Testament times. However, this is the kind of inspired utterance that is fulfilled over and over again by the same or an equivalent organization. As it happened in the first centuries of the Christian era, so we may be assured, it has happened and will happen again in our dispensation. The day of persecution and martyrdom has not passed. *Mortal Messiah*, p. 51. DCBM, p. 89.) yea, and tortureth them and bindeth them down, and yoketh them with a ^cyoke of iron, and bringeth them down into captivity. (Bruce R. McConkie said: "Nephi saw the 'church which is most abominable above all other churches' in vision. He 'saw the devil that he was the foundation of it'; and also the murders, wealth, harlotry, persecutions, and evil desires that are part of this organization (1 Ne 13:1-10) "He saw that this church took away from the gospel of the Lamb many covenants and many plain and precious parts; that it perverted the right ways of the Lord; that it deleted many teachings from the Bible; that it was 'the mother of harlots'; and finally that the Lord would again restore the gospel of salvation. (1 Ne. 13:24-42.) Similar visions were given to John as recorded in the 17th and 18th chapters of Revelation. He saw this evil church as a whole ruling over peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues; as being full of blasphemy, abominations, filthiness, and fornication; as having the name, 'MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH'; as drunken with the blood of the saints; as revelling in wealth and the delicacies of the earth; as making merchandise of all costly items and of 'slaves, and souls of men.' And then John, as did Nephi, saw the

fall and utter destruction of this great church whose foundation is the devil. In this world of carnality and sensuousness, the great and abominable church will continue its destructive course. But there will be an eventual future day when evil shall end, 'and the great and abominable church, which is the whore of all the earth, shall be cast down by devouring fire.' (D. & C. 29:21; Ezek. 38; 39; 1 Ne. 22:23; Rev. 18.) Before that day, however, desolations will sweep through the earth and the various branches of the great and abominable church 'shall war among themselves, and the sword of their own hands shall fall upon their own heads, and they shall be drunken with their own blood.' (1 Ne. 22:13-14; 14:3.)" (*Mormon Doctrine*, pp.138-9))

6 And it came to pass that I beheld this ^agreat and ^babominable church; (The term *church* (Hebrew *qahal* or *edah*; Greek *ekklesia*) had a slightly broader meaning anciently than it does now and referred to an assembly, congregation, or association of people which bonded them together and commanded their loyalties. Thus the term was not necessarily restricted to religious associations and, in fact, at Athens was used to denote the legislative assembly of government. ³ When we put all this together it appears that the phrase *great and abominable church* means an immense assembly or association of people bound together by their loyalty to that which God hates. Stephen E. Robinson, *The Book of Mormon: First Nephi, The Doctrinal Foundation*, p. 178) and I saw the ^cdevil that he was the founder of it.

7 And I also saw ^agold, and silver, and silks, and scarlets, and fine-twined ^blinen, and all manner of precious clothing; and I saw many harlots.

8 And the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold the gold, and the silver, and the silks, and the scarlets, and the fine-twined linen, and the precious clothing, and the harlots, are the ^adesires of this great and abominable church.

9 And also for the ^apraise of the world do they ^bdestroy the saints of God, and bring them down into captivity. (The word saint in Greek denotes "set apart, separate, [and] holy." If we are to be Saints in our day, we need to separate ourselves from evil conduct and destructive pursuits that are prevalent in the world. Quentin L. Cook, Conference Report, Oct. 2003, p. 100-101)

10 And it came to pass that I looked and beheld many waters; and they divided the Gentiles from the seed of my brethren.

11 And it came to pass that the angel said unto me: Behold the wrath of God is upon the seed of thy brethren. (When the Europeans discovered America, that was the wrath of God. Teachings of the Book of Mormon, 1:197)

12 And I looked and beheld a man among the Gentiles (**Christopher Columbus**), who was separated from the seed of my brethren by the many waters; and I beheld the Spirit of God, that it came down and ^awrought upon the man; and he went forth upon the many waters (**Atlantic Ocean**), even unto the seed of my brethren, (On October 12, 1492 at 2:00 in the morning of a very bright and clear night with a brilliant moon (**Is it possible that this is the Day of Atonement or the Feast of Tabernacles when Columbus lands in America? Is this symbolic of the Second Coming of Christ?**) and the sea high with a good following wind, a sailor in the mast sighted either St. Kitt or San Salvador, the outmost island in the Caribbean. America was discovered, and this was the stroke of doom, "the wrath of God upon the seed of my brethren. Teachings of the Book of Mormon, 1:197) who were in the promised land. ("During seven long years Columbus importuned King Ferdinand for a hearing. But he was generally regarded as a visionary. Even the children in the streets knew him as one mentally unsound. When, at last, the learned council condescended to make a report, it was to the effect that the plan was too foolish to merit attention. 'It is absurd,' they said, 'to believe that there are people on the other side of the world, walking with their heels upward, and their heads hanging down. And then, how can a ship get there? The torrid zone through which they must pass, is a region of fire, where the very waves boil. And even if a ship could perchance get around there safely, how could it ever get back? Can a ship sail uphill?' With such arguments the wise men of Spain were about to drive Columbus out of the country. In fact, he decided to go to France. But, fortunately, the queen, Isabella, had as much to say in such matters as her royal consort. And she listened to friends of Columbus. She was even willing to raise money on her jewels to defray the expenses of a

voyage. But this was not required of her. Luis de Santangel, who held the keys to the treasury of Aragon, looked after the finances. The agreement between the regents and Columbus was signed on April 17, 1492. Columbus shed tears of joy. He had reached the goal, after eighteen long years of labor, disappointments and heartache. Columbus is described as a man of commanding presence, tall and powerful, fair, ruddy complexion, and blue-grey eyes. By the time he sailed for the new world, his hair had turned white. His bearing was courteous and his conversation was captivating. Notwithstanding all discouragement, he never lost faith in his divine calling and mission. It was on August 3, 1492, that Columbus with three vessels—the Santa Maria, the Pinta, and the Niña, with 90 souls on board—set out from Palos, Spain. It was on October 12, the same year that Columbus with a retinue of officers and men set foot on the beach of an island which he named San Salvador.” (Reynolds and Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 1, p. 119) “According to the vision of Nephi, it was the Spirit of God that prompted first Columbus and then the Gentiles to go forth upon the waters. That Columbus considered himself inspired is well authenticated history. The following from an enlightening article by Mark Petersen on, ‘American History and Nephi’s Vision,’ published in the *Deseret News*, March 25, 1933, proves that he was very much conscious of his divine calling: “Many biographies have been written concerning Columbus. We take one at random, and quote from ‘Columbus, Don Quixote of the Seas,’ by Jacob Wasserman, translated into English from the German by Eric Sutton and published in Boston: “On page 18 of this book, Columbus is directly quoted as follows: “From my first youth onward, I was a seaman, and have so continued until this day. Wherever ship has been I have been. I have spoken and treated with learned men, priests and laymen, Latin and Greeks, Jews and Moors, and with many men of other faiths. The Lord was well disposed to my desire, and he bestowed upon me courage and understanding; knowledge of seafaring he gave me in abundance; of astrology as much as was needed, and of geometry and astronomy likewise. Further, he gave me joy and cunning in drawing maps and thereon cities, mountains, rivers, islands and the harbors, each one in its place. I have seen and truly I have studied all books, cosmographies, histories, chronicles and philosophies, and other arts, for which our Lord with provident hand unlocked my mind, sent me upon the seas, and gave me fire for the deed. Those who heard of my emprise called it foolish, mocked me, and laughed. But who can doubt but that the HOLY GHOST INSPIRED ME?” “On page 46 of the same book, we read that in the year of his success, Columbus wrote upon one occasion Ferdinand: ‘I CAME TO YOUR MAJESTY AS THE EMISSARY OF THE HOLY GHOST.’” (Reynolds and Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 1, p. 121) A man named Madariaga spoke with Hugh Nibley and stated that he believed Columbus was a Jew. His journals speak of dating things according to the “Second House” meaning the temple at the time of Christ. His passion was to rebuild Jerusalem. The reason he wanted the money from the Indies was to rebuild the temple. That was his project; that’s why he wanted the gold. *Teachings of the Book of Mormon*, 1:197. At the 1854 Fourth of July celebration in Salt Lake City, President Brigham Young spoke of the Lord’s direction of the events that led to the modern discovery of America: “The Almighty . . . moved upon Columbus to launch forth upon the trackless deep to discover the American Continent” (*JD* 7:13). Elder Orson Hyde, speaking at the same celebration as President Young, made perhaps the most intriguing reference to this theme, connecting Columbus’ voyage and discoveries with the ministry of Moroni, the ancient American prophet and divine messenger and caretaker of the records of the Book of Mormon. Referring to him as the “Prince of America,” Elder Hyde noted that Moroni “presides over the destinies of America, and feels a lively interest in all our doings. . . . This same angel was with Columbus and gave him deep impressions, by dreams and by visions, respecting this New World.” He continued, “The angel of God helped him—was with him on the stormy deep, calmed the troubled elements, and guided his frail vessel to the desired haven” (*JD* 6:368).

13 And it came to pass that I beheld the Spirit of God, that it wrought upon other Gentiles (Pilgrims and Puritans); and they went forth out of captivity, upon the many waters.

14 And it came to pass that I beheld many^a multitudes of the Gentiles upon the^b land of promise; and I beheld the wrath of God, that it was upon the seed of my brethren; and they were^c scattered before the

Gentiles and were smitten. (The 1981 *Book of Mormon Student Manual* reads: “The fulfillment of Nephi’s prophecy concerning the scattering of the seed of his brethren is so vast a topic as to fill volumes and can be touched on here only briefly. It is one of the most tragic stories of history, equaling in many ways the persecution and suffering of the Jewish people through the centuries. (See 1 Ne 19:13-15) “From the time Columbus landed in the West Indies, the destruction and driving of the Indian people began. The extent of this destruction has only recently started coming to full light. For example, Wilbur R. Jacobs a noted historian, refutes the earlier projections made by European and American scholars of the Indian population at the time Columbus arrived in the Western Hemisphere in 1492. Estimates used to place the Indian population of North America at about a million, and in both North and South America at no more than 8 million. However, according to Jacobs, modern projections which are widely accepted today place the total at 90 million for the whole of the Western Hemisphere and nearly 10 million in North America alone. (See “The Indian and the Frontier in American History—A Need for Revision,” *Western Historical Quarterly*, Jan. 1973, p. 45.) When this total of 10 million Indians living in North America is compared with the estimated 235,000 who were alive at the turn of the twentieth century, one begins to glimpse the scope of the tragedy... .”...That story was repeated numerous times at the hands of men like Cortez, Pizarro, and DeSoto, in Peru, Colombia, Mexico, and the United States. The scenes viewed by Nephi six hundred years before Christ were fulfilled with horrible reality. As one author put it: ‘Here was a race in process of being engulfed in an irresistible flood of peoples of an utterly different culture. Dislocated from their accustomed seats, transplanted again and again, treated by whites as hostile encumbrances of the fertile earth to be brushed aside or destroyed, bewildered by a type of economy for which they were unprepared, decimated by disease and vices to which they had built up no resistance, repeatedly seeing solemn treaties violated, subject to shifting governmental policies, preyed upon by incompetent and greedy officials, and at times demoralized by an excess of well intentioned but ill directed paternalistic kindness, it is a wonder that the Indians survived.’ (Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity, The Great Century*, vol. 4, p. 323)” (*Book of Mormon Student Manual*, 1981, pp. 34-5))

15 And I beheld the Spirit of the Lord, that it was upon the Gentiles, and they did prosper and ^aobtain the ^bland for their inheritance; and I beheld that they were white, and exceedingly fair and ^cbeautiful, like unto my people before they were ^dslain.

16 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld that the Gentiles who had gone forth out of captivity did humble themselves before the Lord; and the power of the Lord was ^awith them.

17 And I beheld that their mother Gentiles were gathered together upon the waters, and upon the land also, to battle against them. (English, French and Spanish)

18 And I beheld that the power of God was with them, and also that the wrath of God was upon all those that were gathered together ^aagainst them to battle.

19 And I, Nephi, beheld that the Gentiles that had gone out of captivity were ^adelivered by the power of God out of the hands of all other nations. (An article in the June 1999 *Ensign*, entitled “Preparing for the Restoration,” discusses these historical developments as preludes to the restoration of the gospel: “On the occasion of the Church’s centennial in 1930, the First presidency declared: ‘It was not by chance that the Puritans left their native land and sailed away to the shores of New England, and that others followed later. They were the advance guard of the army of the Lord, [foreordained] to establish the God-given system of government under which we live...and prepare the way for the restoration of the Gospel of Christ.’ President Ezra Taft Benson taught that ‘all of the great events that have transpired [in America], including the coming of Columbus and of the Pilgrim fathers, were foreseen by ancient prophets.’ After prophesying about Columbus, Nephi continued: ‘I beheld the Spirit of God, that it wrought upon other Gentiles; and they went forth out of captivity, upon the many waters’ (1 Ne 13:13). Writers such as Plymouth Plantation governor William Bradford (1590-1657) described the persecution and imprisonment the Pilgrims endured in Europe before they fled to America in search of religious liberty. Nephi foresaw that the colonists would ‘humble themselves before the Lord’ (1 Ne 13:16). William

Bradford recorded that as the Pilgrims set sail on their voyage to America, 'they had a day of solemn humiliation,' their pastor proclaiming 'a fast, that we might humble ourselves before our God.' Acting under inspiration, the Pilgrims drew up the Mayflower Compact, said to be 'the first written constitution in North America,' which called for obedience to laws enacted by the group rather than decreed by a monarch. "The Puritans subsequently settled in Massachusetts Bay and eventually absorbed the Pilgrims. However, the Puritans were not tolerant of those who did not believe as they did. One of the dissenters among the Puritans was Roger Williams, who believed in religious freedom and maintained that the apostolic church organized by Christ was no longer on the earth. After banishment, Williams and his followers founded Providence, Rhode Island, and adopted principles that became important traditions in the United States, such as democracy, freedom of religion, and separation of church and state. "Colonists in other parts of America also worked for religious freedom. Under the leadership of the Calvert family, Roman Catholics settled in Maryland and in 1649 passed the Act of Toleration, which advocated freedom of conscience. In 1681 the king of England granted a charter of land to devout Quaker William Penn, whose colony in Pennsylvania became a model of religious tolerance. Of these colonists President Benson wrote, 'The Pilgrims of Plymouth, the Calverts of Maryland, Roger Williams, William Penn—all had deep religious convictions that played a principal part in their coming to the New World. They too, I believe, came here under the inspiration of heaven.' "The final event that Nephi observed in his vision of the American colonies was the War for Independence. He wrote: "'And I beheld that their mother Gentiles were gathered together upon the waters, and upon the land also, to do battle against them. "And I beheld that the power of God was with them, and also that the wrath of God was upon all those that were gathered together against them to battle. "And I, Nephi, beheld that the Gentiles that had gone out of captivity were delivered by the power of God out of the hands of all other nations' (1 Ne 13:17-19). "President Wilford Woodruff taught: 'Those men who laid the foundation of this American government and signed the Declaration of Independence were the best spirits the God of heaven could find on the face of the earth....General Washington and all the men that labored for the purpose were inspired of the Lord.' President Woodruff also related: 'Every one of those men that signed the Declaration of Independence, with General Washington, called upon me, as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the Temple at St. George, two consecutive nights and demanded at my hands that I should go forth and attend to the ordinances of the House of God for them.' "George Washington gave credit to God for the victory of the United States. In his farewell address to his army, he said: 'The disadvantageous circumstances on our part, under which the war was undertaken, can never be forgotten. The singular interpositions of Providence in our feeble condition were such, as could scarcely escape the attention of the most unobserving; while the unparalleled perseverance of the Armies of the [United] States, through almost every possible suffering and discouragement for the space of eight long years, was little short of a standing miracle.' President Spencer W. Kimball said: 'The Lord permitted these few poorly armed and ill-clad men at Valley Forge and elsewhere to defeat a great army,...a few against the many, but the few had on their side the Lord God of heaven, that gave them victory. And there came political liberty and religious liberty with it, all in preparation for the day when a young boy would come forth and would seek and make contact with the Lord and open the doors of heaven again.' "After the colonists won their independence, they experimented for a short time with a government under the Articles of Confederation. When they found that method inadequate, leaders turned their attention to drafting a new form of government. Few, if any, people on earth hold the resulting United States Constitution in higher esteem than do Latter-day Saints. The Lord has said: 'That every man may act in doctrine and principle...according to the moral agency which I have given unto him, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment...' "And for this purpose have I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose, and redeemed the land by the shedding of blood' (D&C 101:78,80). "The Constitution and Bill of Rights applied directly to the needs of a new religion because they provided for freedom of religion, speech, press, and assembly. Later the Prophet Joseph Smith taught that 'the Constitution of the United States is a

glorious standard; it is founded in the wisdom of God. It is a heavenly banner.” (Arnold K. Garr, June 1999 Ensign, pp 38-40))

20 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld that they did prosper in the land; and I beheld a ^abook, and it was carried forth among them. (The Bible.)

21 And the angel said unto me: Knowest thou the meaning of the book?

22 And I said unto him: I know not.

23 And he said: Behold it proceedeth out of the mouth of a Jew. And I, Nephi, beheld it; and he said unto me: The ^abook that thou beholdest is a ^brecord of the ^cJews, which contains the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; and it also containeth many of the prophecies of the holy prophets; and it is a record like unto the engravings which are upon the ^dplates of brass, save there are not so many; nevertheless, they contain the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; wherefore, they are of great worth unto the Gentiles.

24 And the angel of the Lord said unto me: Thou hast beheld that the ^abook proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew; and when it proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew it contained the fulness of the gospel of the Lord, of whom the twelve apostles bear record; and they bear record according to the truth which is in the Lamb of God.

25 Wherefore, these things go forth from the ^aJews in purity unto the ^bGentiles, according to the truth which is in God. (From sundry revelations which had been received, it was apparent that many important points touching the salvation of men, had been taken from the Bible, or lost before it was compiled. TPJS, p. 9-10. From what we can draw from the Scriptures relative to the teaching of heaven, we are induced to think that much instruction has been given to man since the beginning which we do not possess now. TPJS, p. 61. I believe the Bible as it read when it came from the pen of the original writers. Ignorant translators, careless transcribers, or designing and corrupt priests have committed many errors. TPJS, p. 327. Surely the most plain and precious of all truths lost from the Bible, particularly the Old Testament, are the clear and unequivocal declarations of the mission of Jesus Christ, his foreordained role as Messiah and Savior of the world, and the covenantal elements of his gospel, which have been taught from Adam down through each succeeding dispensation. Thus the Book of Mormon's highest purpose is to restore to the universal family of God that crucial knowledge of Christ's role in the salvation of every man, woman, and child who now lives, has ever lived, or will yet live upon the earth. It is written to the convincing of all who read its pages with "a sincere heart, with real intent" that Jesus is the Christ. Jeffrey R. Holland, Nurturing Faith Through the Book of Mormon, p. 4)

26 And after they go forth by the ^ahand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews ^bunto the Gentiles, thou seest the formation of that ^cgreat and abominable ^dchurch, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have ^etaken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are ^fplain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away.

27 And all this have they done that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord, that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men. (The angel made it clear to Nephi that the corruptions of the Bible were not simply a result of subtle accidents of hand and eye, but rather a premeditated program with evil ends in mind, those involved in this abominable enterprise were a part of the mother of harlots and thus represented and accomplished the purposes of him who is Perdition. DCBM, p. 98-99)

28 Wherefore, thou seest that after the book hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, that there are many plain and ^aprecious things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God.

29 And after these plain and precious things were ^ataken away it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles; and after it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles, yea, even across the many waters which thou hast seen with the Gentiles which have gone forth out of captivity, thou seest—because of the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the book, which were plain unto the understanding of the children of men, according to the plainness which is in the Lamb of God—because

of these things which are taken away out of the gospel of the Lamb, an exceedingly great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them. (So what exactly was taken out of the Bible that causes such stumbling blocks for the people? In an editorial published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we read what the ancient biblical text was really like: The most striking thing about it was that, as originally written, the Old Testament WAS A TESTIMONY AND WITNESS FOR CHRIST! If we had the Old Testament as it was originally written, mankind would have a most powerful – an infallible – witness that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Christ, that He gave the Law to Moses, that He was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and that His coming into mortality was plainly foretold in a detailed manner in holy writ. The witness for Christ was the most important thing in that ancient record, and that is what was eliminated by enemies of Christ who sought to destroy all scriptural marks of identification which might have clearly identified Him as the Savior of the world. *Unlocking the Book of Mormon*, p. 26)

30 Nevertheless, thou beholdest that the Gentiles who have gone forth out of captivity, and have been lifted up by the power of God above all other nations, upon the face of the land which is choice above all other lands, which is the land that the Lord God hath covenanted with thy father that his seed should have for the ^aland of their inheritance; wherefore, thou seest that the Lord God will not suffer that the Gentiles will utterly destroy the ^bmixture of thy ^cseed, which are among thy brethren. (Both Nephi and Laman's seed would be spared. There is no such thing as a pure Lamanite.)

31 Neither will he suffer that the Gentiles shall ^adestroy the seed of thy brethren. (Destroy here means to scatter.)

32 Neither will the Lord God suffer that the Gentiles shall forever remain in that awful state of blindness, which thou beholdest they are in, because of the plain and most precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back by that ^aabominable church, whose formation thou hast seen.

33 Wherefore saith the Lamb of God: I will be ^amerciful unto the Gentiles, unto the visiting of the remnant of the house of Israel in great judgment.

34 And it came to pass that the angel of the Lord spake unto me, saying: Behold, saith the Lamb of God, after I have ^avisited the ^bremnant of the house of Israel—and this remnant of whom I speak is the seed of thy father—wherefore, after I have visited them in judgment, and smitten them by the hand of the Gentiles, and after the Gentiles do ^cstumble exceedingly, because of the most plain and precious parts of the ^dgospel of the Lamb which have been kept back by that abominable church, which is the mother of harlots, saith the Lamb—I will be merciful unto the ^eGentiles in that day, insomuch that I will ^fbring forth unto them, in mine own power, much of my ^ggospel, which shall be plain and precious, saith the Lamb.

(The Book of Mormon will come forth among a Gentile nation, that they may first opportunity to accept the gospel. Once rejected, the Gentiles will be without excuse, and then the gospel will go to the Jews.)

35 For, behold, saith the Lamb: I will manifest myself unto thy seed, that they shall write many things which I shall minister unto them, which shall be plain and precious; and after thy seed shall be destroyed, and dwindle in unbelief, and also the seed of thy brethren (Destroyed in this context means scattered, not wiped out.), behold, ^athese things shall be hid up (Moroni buried the plates), to come forth unto the Gentiles, by the gift and power of the Lamb. (The Book of Mormon was translated by the gift and power of God. Joseph only took a total of about 63 days to translate the Book of Mormon. No mere man could have written such a book in such a short span of time without the help of God.)

36 And in them shall be written my ^agospel, saith the Lamb, and my ^brock (The rock of revelation.) and my salvation. (The purpose of the Book of Mormon is to bring us to Christ, not to expound a fullness of gospel doctrine.)

37 And ^ablessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my ^bZion at that day, for they shall have the ^cgift and the ^dpower of the Holy Ghost; and if they ^eendure unto the end they shall be ^flifted up at the last day, and shall be saved in the everlasting ^gkingdom of the Lamb; and whoso shall ^hpublish peace, yea, tidings of great joy, how beautiful upon the mountains shall they be.

38 And it came to pass that I beheld the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the ^abook of the

Lamb of God, which had proceeded forth from the mouth of the Jew, that it came forth from the Gentiles^b unto the remnant of the seed of my brethren. (When Elder Melvin J. Ballard visited the Ft. Peck and Blackfoot reservations he said he met many who knew him as soon as they saw him and asked for the "Book" which he was to bring them. They said they had seen him in dreams, bringing to them a "Book." When he handed them the Book of Mormon they adopted it gladly, and could read and understand it. He declared that it was his belief that one of the "Three Nephites" had been laboring among them for years teaching them the gospel and preparing them for our missionaries when they should come. As quoted in *The Fulfillment of Book of Mormon Prophecies*, p. 130-131, 146)

39 And after it had come forth unto them I beheld^a other^b books, which came forth by the power of the Lamb, from the Gentiles unto them, unto the^c convincing of the Gentiles and the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the Jews who were scattered upon all the face of the earth, that the records of the prophets and of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are^d true. (Dead Sea Scrolls?)

40 And the angel spake unto me, saying: These^a last records (The Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants and Pearl of Great Price and Inspired Translation of the Bible.), which thou hast seen among the Gentiles, shall^b establish the truth of the^c first, which are of the^d twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and precious things which have been taken away from them; and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the^e Savior of the world; and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved.

41 And they must come according to the words which shall be established by the mouth of the Lamb; and the words of the Lamb shall be made known in the records of thy seed, as well as in the^a records of the twelve apostles of the Lamb (We don't have all the records of the Twelve Apostles; we have a few of the Apostles. ... There are these records that come forth – for example, the Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of Phillip. There are fourteen sayings of Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas which have been accepted and included in the new revised version of the Bible. This wasn't discovered until 1950, and yet it is accepted as genuine sayings of Jesus that are coming forth. Teachings of the Book of Mormon, 1:201); wherefore they both shall be established in^b one; for there is^c one God and one^d Shepherd over all the earth. (These last records which were to come forth to bear witness of the book of the Lamb of God, which is the Bible, are the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the revelations of the Lord to Joseph Smith. Joseph Fielding Smith, Man, His Origin and Destiny, p. 411-12. Joseph Smith's translation of the Bible helped restore many of the plain and precious things which were lost.)

42 And the time cometh that he shall manifest himself unto all nations, both unto the^a Jews and also unto the Gentiles; and after he has manifested himself unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles, then he shall manifest himself unto the Gentiles and also unto the Jews, and the^b last shall be first, and the^c first shall be last.

CHAPTER 14

An angel tells Nephi of the blessings and cursings to fall upon the Gentiles—There are only two churches: the Church of the Lamb of God and the church of the devil—The saints of God in all nations are persecuted by the great and abominable church—The apostle John shall write concerning the end of the world. [Between 600 and 592 B.C.]

1 AND it shall come to pass, that if the^a Gentiles shall hearken unto the Lamb of God in that day that he shall manifest himself unto them in word, and also in^b power, in very deed, unto the^c taking away of their^d stumbling blocks—

2 And harden not their hearts against the Lamb of God, they shall be numbered among the seed of thy father; yea, they shall be^a numbered among the house of Israel; and they shall be a^b blessed people upon the^c promised land forever; they shall be no more brought down into captivity; and the house of Israel shall no more be confounded.

3 And that great^a pit, which hath been digged for them by that great and abominable

church, (Notice that the title “church” is not capitalized, so it is not just one particular institution.) which was founded by the devil and his children, that he might lead away the souls of men down to hell—yea, that great pit which hath been digged for the destruction of men shall be filled by those who digged it, unto their utter destruction, saith the Lamb of God; not the destruction of the soul (This refers to the spirit of man, which was not created nor can be destroyed.), save it be the casting of it into that ^bhell which hath no end. (Both paradise and hell have an end in the Resurrection. Hell is the gateway to the telestial kingdom. It is endless in the sense that those who experience it are subject to the punishment of God, whose name is Endless. (D&C 19:10-12.) An endless hell, meaning literally a never-ending torment, is reserved exclusively for the sons of perdition, those who inherit outer darkness in and after the resurrection. (D&C 76:44-48. DCBM, p. 108)

4 For behold, this is according to the ^acaptivity of the devil, and also according to the justice of God, upon all those who will work wickedness and abomination before him.

5 And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, Nephi, saying: Thou hast beheld that if the Gentiles repent it shall be ^awell with them; and thou also knowest concerning the covenants of the Lord unto the house of Israel; and thou also hast heard that whoso ^brepenteth not must perish.

6 Therefore, ^awo be unto the Gentiles if it so be that they harden their hearts against the Lamb of God.

7 For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a ^amarvelous work among the children of men; a ^bwork which shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or on the other—either to the convincing of them unto ^cpeace and ^dlife eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds unto their being brought down into captivity, and also into destruction, both temporally and spiritually, according to the ^ccaptivity of the devil, of which I have spoken.

8 And it came to pass that when the angel had spoken these words, he said unto me: Rememberest thou the ^acovenants of the Father unto the house of Israel? I said unto him, Yea.

9 And it came to pass that he said unto me: Look, and behold that great and abominable church, which is the mother of abominations, whose founder is the ^adevil.

10 And he said unto me: Behold there are save ^atwo churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the ^bother is the church of the ^cdevil (The world); wherefore, ^dwhoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the ^cwhore of all the earth. (“Nephi had already used the expression ‘great and abominable church’ in reference to a specific organization identified in his historical time as being more destructive and wicked than all other churches of its day. He used that same expression now in a broader or more general sense. In the context of his vision, the church or kingdom of God had again been established on the earth. With the establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the restoration of priesthood and its keys, there was once again an organization on earth with the authority to preach the gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof; it is by divine testimony the ‘only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth’ (D&C 1:30), salvation being found in none other.” (McConkie and Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 1, p. 109) Bruce R. McConkie said: “The titles church of the devil and great and abominable church are used to identify all churches or organizations of whatever name or nature -- whether political, philosophical, educational, economic social, fraternal, civic, or religious -- which are designed to take men on a course that leads away from God and his laws and thus from salvation in the kingdom of God....” “Hence we find our Lord saying, ‘He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me

scattereth abroad.’ (Matt. 12:30.)” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p.138))

11 And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many ^awaters; (“Waters” in this context means people.) and she had dominion over ^ball the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people.

12 And it came to pass that I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and its numbers were ^afew, (Even though our numbers may be as much as hundreds of millions, it will be relatively small in comparison to the rest of the world.) because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters (among many people); nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God, were also upon ^ball the face of the earth (We will have congregations throughout the entire earth.); and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small, because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw.

13 And it came to pass that I beheld that the great mother of abominations did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to ^afight against the Lamb of God. (Our persecutions and difficulties have scarcely begun. We saw mobbings and murders and martyrdom as the foundations of the work were laid in the United States. These same things with greater intensity, shall yet fall upon the faithful in all nations. Millennial Messiah, p. 55)

14 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth (Not gathered to Zion); and they were ^aarmed with ^brighteousness (We are not armed with it now, are we? Far from it; we are armed with acquisitiveness and with great managerial skill, and things like that. That is not known as righteousness. Teachings of the Book of Mormon, 1:105) and with the ^cpower of God in great glory. (We shall go forward according to the divine timetable, a timetable under which the Lord will prepare the way for us to teach the gospel in one nation after another as rapidly as our strength and means are sufficient for us to do the work. Nephi foresaw that we shall establish congregations of the saints in all nations and among all people and kindreds before the promised unity of the faith. See verse 12. Before the Millennial era, before the time when Christ shall reign personally upon the earth, the elect of God among every kindred, the saints who speak every tongue, the converts among all peoples and nations, having first believed the restored gospel, will go to the temples of God and receive the ordinances of exaltation whereby they qualify to become kings and priests...And truly did Joseph Smith prophesy: The Standard of Truth has been erected; no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the great Jehovah shall say the work is done. DHC, 4:540. Bruce R. McConkie, CR, April 1969, p. 144.)

15 And it came to pass that I beheld that the wrath of God was ^apoured out upon that great and abominable church, insomuch that there were wars and rumors of wars among all the ^bnations and kindreds of the earth.

16 And as there began to be ^awars and rumors of wars among all the nations which belonged to the mother of abominations, the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold, the wrath of God is upon the mother of harlots; and behold, thou seest all these things—

17 And when the ^aday cometh that the ^bwrath of God is poured out upon the mother of harlots, which is the great and abominable church of all the earth, whose founder is the devil, then, at that day, the ^cwork of the Father shall commence, in preparing the way for

the fulfilling of his ^dcovenants, which he hath made to his people who are of the house of Israel.

18 And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, saying: Look!

19 And I looked and beheld a man, and he was dressed in a white robe.

20 And the angel said unto me: Behold ^aone of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. (John the Beloved)

21 Behold, he shall ^asee and ^bwrite the ^cremainder of these things; yea, and also many things which have been.

22 And he shall also write concerning the end of the world.

23 Wherefore, the things which he shall write are just and true; and behold they are written in the ^abook which thou beheld proceeding out of the mouth of the Jew; and at the time they proceeded out of the mouth of the Jew, or, at the time the book proceeded out of the mouth of the Jew, the things which were written were plain and pure, and most ^bprecious (We have over eight thousand manuscripts of the New Testament, no two of them alike. And the oldest one is from the third century...But all of our documents are copies of copies of copies. Nearly all of them come from the eighth and ninth centuries. Teachings of the Book of Mormon, 1:205) and easy to the understanding of all men. (Joseph Smith said: The Book of Revelation is one of the plainest books God ever caused to be written. TPJS, p. 290)

24 And behold, the things which this ^aapostle of the Lamb shall write are many things which thou hast seen; and behold, the remainder shalt thou see. (Nephi saw the remainder of the vision John saw, but was forbidden to write it.)

25 But the things which thou shalt see hereafter thou shalt not write; for the Lord God hath ordained the apostle of the Lamb of God that he should ^awrite them.

26 And also others who have been (Like the brother of Jared, Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joseph Smith and others.), to them hath he shown all things, and they have ^awritten them; and they are ^bsealed up to come forth in their purity, (Now the only way you can preserve a document in its purity is to bury it because as soon as you start copying, you start making mistakes. It always happens. You never have a pure document as long as it's in the hands of men. Teachings of the Book of Mormon, 1:206) according to the truth which is in the Lamb, in the own due time of the Lord, unto the house of Israel.

27 And I, Nephi, heard and bear record, that the name of the apostle of the Lamb was ^aJohn, according to the word of the angel.

28 And behold, I, Nephi, am forbidden that I should write the remainder of the things which I saw and heard; wherefore the things which I have written sufficeth me; and I have written but a small part of the things which I saw.

29 And I bear record that I saw the things which my ^afather saw, and the angel of the Lord did make them known unto me.

30 And now I make an end of speaking concerning the things which I saw while I was ^acarried away in the spirit; and if all the things which I saw are not written, the things which I have written are ^btrue. And thus it is. Amen.