

LESSON 39
“Behold, My Joy Is Full”
3 Nephi 17-19

OVERVIEW:

Jesus commands the Nephites to ponder and pray about what He has taught. He heals the sick, blesses the children, and prays for the people. Jesus institutes the sacrament among the Nephites. The disciples teach and minister to the people. The Savior returns to teach the people and pray for them.

SCRIPTURES:

THIRD NEPHI
THE BOOK OF NEPHI
THE SON OF NEPHI, WHO WAS THE SON OF HELAMAN
CHAPTER 17

Jesus directs the people to ponder his words and pray for understanding—He heals their sick—He prays for the people, using language that cannot be written—Angels minister to and fire encircles their little ones. [A.D. 34] (Vaughn J. Featherstone: “Let me tell you the greatest experience I believe I have had in all my readings of the scriptures—and I am sharing something that is very tender with me. I remember the night that I read 3 Nephi the 17th chapter That is when I discovered the Lord Jesus Christ, my Redeemer, the Lord of lords, the King of kings, my Savior, my personal Savior; and I believe that is where I finally found the description of the Savior as I thought him to be. (Elder Featherstone then quoted most of chapter 17) ...I want you to know I was there. I wouldn’t know any more surely if I had been there than I would know having read this book. And I promise you that vicariously every single young man in the Church can read the scriptures and have that same experience with all of the prophets. And you can gain your own testimony, and it need not be pinned on someone else’s coat sleeve. You can actually know. You can know that we have a modern prophet. Read his words. Listen to him.” (Ensign, Jan. 1973) This chapter gives us an insight into the heart of the Master. A tender, kind and merciful Savior. The mercy he extended and the spiritual blessing he bestowed upon them also serve as a foreshadowing of his millennial ministry when he will come in glory with healing in his wings to prepare for the ultimate triumph of the plan of salvation. DCBM, 4:115)

1 BEHOLD, now it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words he looked round about again on the multitude, and he said unto them: Behold, my ^atime is at hand.

2 I ^aperceive that ye are weak, that ye cannot ^bunderstand all my words which I am commanded of the Father to speak unto you at this time.

3 Therefore, go ye unto your homes, and ^aponder upon the things which I have said, (Gordon B. Hinckley: “We all do a lot of studying, but most of us don’t do much meditation. We don’t take time to think. I’d like to suggest that next fast day . . . everybody in this hall set aside an hour or two. Sit by yourself. Go in the bedroom and lock the door. Go out in the yard under a tree. Go in your study if you have one and shut the door, and think about yourself and your worthiness. Read from this great book [Book of Mormon]...There’s a great word that’s used, ‘ponder.’ Ponder.’ What do we mean by ‘ponder’? Well, I think it simply means kind of quietly thinking things through. Ponder what you have read. Ponder your life. Are you worthy, are you living the commandments...?” (Church News, 01/06/96) Ezra Taft Benson: "Man must take time to meditate, to sweep the cobwebs from his mind, so that he might get a more firm grip on the truth and spend less time chasing phantoms and dallying in projects of lesser worth.... Take time to meditate. Ponder the meaning of the work in which you are engaged. The Lord has counseled 'Let the solemnities of eternity rest upon your mind's' (D&C 43:34). You cannot do that when your minds are preoccupied with the worries and cares of the world." (The Teachings of Ezra

Taft Benson, p. 390. as taken from McConkie, Millet, and Top, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 4, p. 114) Two important points can be drawn from this statement. First, the Savior is planning a proper emphasis on the family and home for gospel instruction and spiritual experience. Second, the Lord is teaching them the importance of pondering as an essential element in acquiring spiritual knowledge. DCBM, 4:113.) and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand, and ^bprepare your minds (The Lord reminded us of the place our agency has in our receiving spiritual growth and blessing. We may understand spiritual experience too passively, waiting for something to happen to us. Perhaps we wait too patiently for the arrival of the spiritual blessings we need. We may not realize that many blessings require, initially, acts of will on our part, a labor in the spirit, a setting aside of time: cleansing of selfish purpose from the heart, submission, envisioning the blessing, thanks in anticipation of receiving the blessing. God gave us agency, and it may have more power than we have used. Catherine Thomas, *Studies in Scripture*, 8:182-83) for the ^cmorrow, and I come unto you again. (This is what we should do after General Conferences and even after Temple sessions. Go home and ponder the messages of the Lord.)

4 But now I ^ago unto the Father, and also to ^bshow myself unto the lost tribes of Israel, for they are not ^clost unto the Father, for he knoweth whither he hath taken them. (He's probably going to visit the descendants of Hagoth and others of the lost Israelites.)

5 And it came to pass that when Jesus had thus spoken, he cast his eyes round about again on the multitude, and beheld they were ^ain tears, and did look steadfastly upon him as if they would ask him to tarry a little longer with them.

6 And he said unto them: Behold, my bowels are filled with ^acompassion towards you. (In middle-eastern customs, the stomach is the center of emotions.)

7 Have ye any that are ^asick among you? Bring them hither. Have ye any that are lame, or blind, or halt, or maimed, or ^bleprous, or that are withered, or that are deaf, or that are afflicted in any manner? Bring them hither and I will ^cheal them, for I have compassion upon you; my bowels are filled with mercy.

8 For I perceive that ye desire that I should show unto you what I have done unto your brethren at Jerusalem, for I see that your ^afaith is ^bsufficient that I should heal you. (The healing was to better prepare them for additional teaching of the gospel.)

9 And it came to pass that when he had thus spoken, all the multitude, with one accord, did go forth with their sick and their afflicted, and their lame, and with their ^ablind, and with their dumb, and with all them that were afflicted in any manner; and he did heal them every one as they were brought forth unto him.

(“This is neither a matter of satisfying curiosity nor a display of power for entertainment or wonder. This manifestation is...intimately connected with faith and salvation. The physical healing means nothing except as it is literally connected to the spiritual healing that the Savior has also brought about. This is certainly the sense in which the Savior instructs the leaders of his Nephite church regarding sinning and healing, as it applies to the unworthy member: ‘Nevertheless, ye shall not cast him out of your synagogues or your places of worship, for unto such shall ye continue to minister; for ye know not but what they will return and repent, and come unto me with full purpose of heart, and *I shall heal them*; and ye shall be the means of bringing salvation unto them’ (3 Nephi 18:32; emphasis added). All of this complex pattern of meaning comes together most dramatically in the physical act of stepping forward and kneeling before the Savior, the experience of literally coming unto Christ, of touching and being touched. That the physical and the spiritual are intertwined should come as no surprise to members of a church that places extraordinary emphasis on ordinances—those small occasions and gestures that allow all of us to participate in the great drama of salvation. To collapse the whole matter of our purpose in this life into one symbolic act would bring us an experience very close to that of the Nephites: ‘And they did all, both they who had been healed and they who were whole, bow down at his feet, and did worship him; and as many as could come for the multitude did kiss his feet, insomuch that they did bathe his feet with their tears’ (3 Nephi 17:10). Isn't this truly what it means to come unto Christ, to ‘close with him’ (as the Puritans used to say), to be invited to come forth, and, because of the

preparations of both the Savior and the saved, to be accepted, literally and completely, doing—acting out what the words themselves describe?” (Neal E. Lambert, *Book of Mormon Symposium Series*, 3 Ne 9-30, edited by PR Cheesman, MS Nyman, and CD Tate, Jr., 1988, p. 204))

10 And they did all, both they who had been healed and they who were whole, bow down at his feet, and did worship him; and as many as could come for the multitude did ^akiss his feet, insomuch that they did bathe his feet with their tears. (They did this after they were healed.)

11 And it came to pass that he commanded that their ^alittle children should be brought. (Elder Wm. Rolfe Kerr: “When the Savior invited the multitude to behold their little ones, was He speaking in the collective sense of a group of little children? Or was He drawing their attention, and ours, to the individual nature and importance of each of those little ones—each of those little individuals? I believe that by His example the Savior was teaching us of the individual and tender care we should give to each one of our little children—indeed to each of our Heavenly Father’s children. It may be the lovable toddler or the wayward teen, the grieving widow or the grateful woman for whom all is well. It may even be your own son or daughter or your own husband or wife. Each is an individual. Each has divine potential. And each must be spiritually nourished and temporally cared for with love, tenderness, and individual attention. The prophet Lehi exhorted his wayward sons, Laman and Lemuel, with ‘all the feeling of a tender parent’ (1 Ne. 8:37). This is the Savior’s way. This is as it should be in our families and in the Church.” (“Behold Your Little Ones”, *Ensign*, Nov. 1996))

12 So they brought their little children and set them down upon the ground round about him, and Jesus stood in the midst; and the multitude gave way till they had all been brought unto him.

13 And it came to pass that when they had all been brought, and Jesus stood in the midst, he commanded the multitude that they should ^akneel down upon the ground. (Why does everybody kneel? Because kneeling is a position of concentration. It’s not an ordinary position. You’re aware of being in a special condition; it’s the best condition to concentrate in. Hugh Nibley, *Teachings of the Book of Mormon*, 3:350)

14 And it came to pass that when they had knelt upon the ground, Jesus groaned within himself, (This shows his deep concern for all of God’s children.) and said: Father, I am ^atroubled because of the wickedness of the people of the house of Israel.

15 And when he had said these words, he himself also ^aknelt upon the earth; and behold he ^bprayed unto the Father, and the things which he prayed cannot be written, and the multitude did bear record who heard him.

16 And after this manner do they bear record: The ^aeye hath never seen, neither hath the ear heard, before, so great and marvelous things as we saw and heard Jesus speak unto the Father; 17 And no ^atongue can speak, neither can there be written by any man, neither can the hearts of men conceive so great and marvelous things as we both saw and heard Jesus speak; and no one can conceive of the joy which filled our souls at the time we heard him pray for us unto the Father.

18 And it came to pass that when Jesus had made an end of praying unto the Father, he arose; but so great was the ^ajoy of the multitude that they were overcome.

19 And it came to pass that Jesus spake unto them, and bade them arise.

20 And they arose from the earth, and he said unto them: Blessed are ye because of your faith. And ^anow behold, my joy is full.

21 And when he had said these words, he ^awept, (Jesus wept for joy, like Joseph wept for joy on seeing his brothers again. Bruce C. Hafen: “He wept—he who had descended below all things, the Man of Sorrows, he who bore all our griefs. The height of his infinite capacity for joy is the inverse, mirror image of the depth of his capacity to bear our burdens. So it is with the enlarged caverns of feeling within our own hearts: as the sorrows of our lives carve and stretch those caverns, they expand our soul’s capacity for joy. Then, when the Man of Sorrows turns our bitter tastes to sweet, our joy—and his—will fill the widened chambers of our hearts with what the scriptures call ‘fulness.’ That is when we have accepted his Atonement and love with such completeness that his purpose for us is fully satisfied. Then

will we know that we were made for this. Then will we know where, and why, and to whom, we belong. 'For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.' (Psalm 107:9.)" (*The Belonging Heart*, p. 315)) and the multitude bare record of it, and he took their little children, one by one, and ^bblessed them, and prayed unto the Father for them.

22 And when he had done this he wept again;

23 And he spake unto the multitude, and said unto them: Behold your little ones.

24 And as they looked to behold they cast their eyes towards heaven, and they saw the heavens open, and they saw angels descending out of heaven as it were in the midst of fire; and they came down and ^aencircled those little ones about, and they were encircled about with fire; and the angels did minister (minister means to discuss or to chat, a back and forth conversation.) unto them. ("Can we imagine anything more lovely, more touching, and more glorious, than this scene must have been? Can we conceive the joy that must have filled the hearts of these Nephites as they beheld the angels of Heaven descending from the Courts of Glory and ministering to their little ones? How deep must have been their love for the Savior. Who had brought these blessings to them? How strong must have grown their faith in Him? We cannot recall a circumstance in recorded history that draws Earth nearer to Heaven than this, or that seems to bind the ties so strongly that unite the Powers of Eternity with the children of mortality." (Reynolds and Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 7, p. 175))

25 And the multitude did see and ^ahear and bear record; and they know that their record is true for they all of them did see and hear, every man for himself; and they were in number about two thousand and five hundred souls; and they did consist of men, women, and children. (It must have taken hours for everyone to come unto him. Maybe as many as 10 hours. The testimonies of these 2500 stand as another witness of Jesus Christ.)

CHAPTER 18

Jesus institutes the sacrament among the Nephites—They are commanded to pray always in his name—Those who eat his flesh and drink his blood unworthily are damned—The disciples are given power to confer the Holy Ghost. [A.D. 34] (Which covenants do you renew when you partake of the Sacrament?)

According to our latter-day prophets and leaders, when you partake of the sacrament you renew whatever covenants you have made with the Lord. For example, if you have been baptized only, that is the covenant you renew. If you have received the Melchizedek Priesthood, you also renew that part of the oath and covenant related to your having received that priesthood. If you have received your endowment, you also renew the covenants associated with it. Further, if you have been sealed, you also renew that covenant. In other words, when you partake of the sacrament, you renew all the covenants you have made with the Lord. John E. MacKay, *Ensign*, Mar 1995, 66)

1 AND it came to pass that Jesus commanded his Disciples (Apostles) that they should bring forth some ^abread and wine unto him. (After the organization of the Church in 1830, the Lord gave a revelation to the Church in which he said: D&C 27: 2 For, behold, I say unto you, that it mattereth not what ye shall ^aeat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament, if it so be that ye do it with an eye single to my ^bglory—^cremembering unto the Father my ^dbody which was laid down for you, and my ^eblood which was shed for the ^fremission of your sins. 3 Wherefore, a commandment I give unto you, that you shall not purchase ^awine neither strong drink of your enemies; 4 Wherefore, you shall partake of none except it is made ^anew among you; yea, in this my Father's kingdom which shall be built up on the earth. From this time on this instruction was followed, and the Lord instructed the Prophet Joseph Smith that pure water could be used instead of wine. As far as our record shows water was first used in the Kirtland Temple in the solemn assemblies held there. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 3:2)

2 And while they were gone for bread and wine, he commanded the multitude that they should sit themselves down upon the earth.

3 And when the Disciples had come with ^abread and wine, he took of the bread and brake and blessed it; and he gave unto the Disciples and commanded that they should eat. (As sacrifice was thus to cease with the occurrence of the great event toward which it pointed, there must needs be a new ordinance to replace it, an ordinance which also would center the attention of the saints on the infinite and eternal atonement. And so Jesus...initiated the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Sacrifice stopped and sacrament started. It was the end of the old era, the beginning of the new. Sacrifice looked forward to the shed blood and bruised flesh of the Lamb of God. The sacrament was to be in remembrance of his spilt blood and broken flesh, the emblems, bread and wine, typifying such as completely as had the shedding of the blood of animals in their days. Bruce R. McConkie, DNTC, 1:719-20)

4 And when they had eaten and were filled, he commanded that they should give unto the multitude.

5 And when the multitude had eaten and were filled, he said unto the Disciples: Behold there shall one be ^aordained among you, and to him will I give power that he shall ^bbreak ^cbread and bless it and give it unto the people of my ^dchurch, unto all those who shall believe and be baptized in my name. (The ordinance of the sacrament of the Lord's supper must be done under the direction of the proper priesthood authority. Merely breaking the bread, reciting the prayers, and partaking of the ordinances – even if done by someone who holds the priesthood – does not mean it is a valid sacramental ordinance. Authority or permission to perform this sacred rite can only be given by the one who holds the keys of the priesthood. On a ward level, this means that only the bishop has the right and authority to grant permission for the sacrament to be administered. Through his keys of priesthood authority, priesthood holders are thus empowered to perform this important ordinance and make its emblems available to members of the ward. DCBM, 4:121-122)

6 And this shall ye always (until the end of mortal time) observe to ^ado, even as I have done, (We are supposed to administer the sacrament exactly the same way the Savior did. That's why the priests must say the prayers exactly as written.) even as I have broken bread and blessed it and given it unto you.

7 And this shall ye do in ^aremembrance of my ^bbody, (They have just handled the Savior's body and have felt the nail marks in his hands and feet. This is still the first day of Jesus' visit which started in chapter 11.) which I have shown unto you. And it shall be a testimony unto the Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me ye shall have my Spirit to be with you. (The Spirit is the earnest money of our salvation. Neal A. Maxwell: "We partake 'in remembrance,' so that we may 'always remember' what Jesus has done for us (3 Nephi 18:11; Moroni 4, 5). If we fail to stir remembrance of blessings received, the human tendency is to say, in effect, whether to one's God or to one's fellows, 'What have you done for me lately?' Indeed, prophets of the Lord have asked directly whether their people had 'sufficiently retained in remembrance' His deliverances and blessings (Alma 5:6-7). It is best to cultivate our 'remembering' capacity now and to be guided accordingly, since at judgment day we will have 'perfect remembrance' (Alma 5:18)." (*A Wonderful Flood of Light*, p. 51))

8 And it came to pass that when he said these words, he commanded his Disciples that they should take of the ^awine of the cup and drink of it, and that they should also give unto the multitude that they might drink of it. (Some have assumed that neither Christ nor the Nephites really drank wine—that it was unfermented grape juice. If such was the case, Joseph Smith should have translated it "grape juice" instead of "wine." Clearly, the wine among the Nephites was an alcoholic beverage (Mosiah 11:15; 22:7-10; Alma 55:8-14). Christ also contrasted the wine he drank at the last supper with the grape juice which he will drink with the righteous in the kingdom of God, But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it *new* with you in my Father's kingdom (Matt 26:29, italics added). The *new* fruit of the vine is grape juice; the *old* fruit of the vine is wine. Other scriptures which speak of grape juice are as follows: Deut 32:14, Mark 14:25, Lu 22:18, DC 27:5, and DC 89:16. Bryan Richards, Gospel Doctrine, Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 18:8)

9 And it came to pass that they did so, and did drink of it and were filled; and they gave unto the multitude, and they did drink, and they were filled. (Jeffrey R. Holland: "We no longer include a supper with this ordinance, but it is a feast nevertheless. We can be fortified by it for whatever life requires of

us, and in so doing we will be more compassionate to others along the way.” (*Conference Report*, Oct. 1995, “This Do in Remembrance of Me”) Melvin J. Ballard: “We must come, however, to the sacrament table hungry. If we should repair to a banquet where the finest of earth's providing may be had, without hunger, without appetite, the food would not be tempting, nor do us any good. If we repair to the sacrament table, we must come hungering and thirsting after righteousness, for spiritual growth.” (“The Sacramental Covenant,” *Improvement Era*, October 1919, pp. 1025))

10 And when the Disciples had done this, Jesus said unto them: Blessed are ye for this thing which ye have done, for this is fulfilling my commandments, and this doth witness unto the Father that ye are ^awilling to do that which I have commanded you.

11 And this shall ye always do to those who repent and are baptized in my name; and ye shall do it in ^aremembrance of my ^bblood, which I have shed for you, that ye may witness unto the Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me ye shall have my Spirit to be with you. (Jeffrey

R. Holland: “...every ordinance of the gospel focuses in one way or another on the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, and surely that is why this particular ordinance with all its symbolism and imagery comes to us more readily and more repeatedly than any other in our life. It comes in what has been called ‘the *most sacred*, the *most holy*, of all the meetings of the Church’ (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:340). Perhaps we do not always attach that kind of meaning to our weekly sacramental service. How ‘sacred’ and how ‘holy’ is it? Do we see it as *our* passover, remembrance of *our* safety and deliverance and redemption? With so very much at stake, this ordinance commemorating our escape from the angel of darkness should be taken more seriously than it sometimes is. It should be a powerful, reverent, reflective moment. It should encourage spiritual feelings and impressions. As such it should not be rushed. It is not something to ‘get over’ so that the real purpose of a sacrament meeting can be pursued. This *is* the real purpose of the meeting. And everything that is said or sung or prayed in those services should be consistent with the grandeur of this sacred ordinance.” (*Conference Report*, Oct. 1995, “This Do in Remembrance of Me”))

12 And I give unto you a commandment that ye shall do these things. And if ye shall always do these things blessed are ye, for ye are built upon my ^arock. (The rock of personal revelation.)

13 But whoso among you shall do ^amore or less (Do the ordinances exactly as they are supposed to be done. That’s why we insist on having the priests read the Sacrament prayers exactly correct.) than these are not built upon my rock, but are built upon a sandy foundation; and when the rain descends, and the floods come, and the winds blow, and beat upon them, they shall ^bfall, and the ^cgates of hell are ready open to receive them.

14 Therefore blessed are ye if ye shall keep my commandments, which the Father hath commanded me that I should give unto you.

15 Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye must watch and ^apray always, (They have just seen the Savior pray for them. They will always remember His example.) lest ye be tempted by the devil, and ye be led away captive by him. (The doctrinal meaning of the word watch in the context of praying always in order to resist temptations, implies more than observation. It means being on guard, being spiritually aware.

Some erroneously believe that as long as they say their prayers God will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able. Certainly this was not the intent of Paul’s words. Adding the words of Alma to those of Paul helps us to better understand why watching must accompany praying. “And now, my brethren, I wish from the inmost part of my heart, yea, with great anxiety even unto pain, that ye would hearken unto my words and cast off your sins, and not procrastinate the day of your repentance; but that ye would humble yourselves before the Lord, and call on his holy name, and watch and pray continually, that ye may not be tempted above that which ye can bear, and thus be led by the Holy Spirit, becoming humble, meek, submissive, patient, full of love and all long-suffering; having faith on the Lord; having a hope that ye shall receive eternal life; having the love of God always in your hearts.” (Alma 13:27-29) One cannot reasonably pray for strength to resist temptation and then carelessly and recklessly flirt with evil. Just as we are saved by the grace of God only “after all we can do” our faith and prayers are

efficacious only after “all we can do” in watching our thoughts, words, and deeds, lest by our own negligence we fall into transgression. If we fail to watch and pray continually we can indeed be tempted above that which we can bear. We must constantly be watchful as well as prayerful to ensure that our thoughts, words, and deeds stay in the spiritual safe zone. Just as the Savior promised protection to the Nephites, his promise is likewise conveyed to us today through the scriptures and living prophets who testify that if we are diligently watchful and prayerful, we will be given the strength to shun any temptation. Ezra Taft Benson, *Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, p. 435. DCBM, 4:123-24)

16 And as I have prayed among you even so shall ye pray in my ^achurch, among my people who do repent and are baptized in my name. Behold I am the ^blight; I have set an ^cexample for you.

17 And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words unto his Disciples, he turned again unto the multitude and said unto them:

18 Behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, ye must watch and pray always lest ye enter into temptation; for ^aSatan desireth to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. (Lucifer has great influence over the children of men; he labors continually to destroy the works of God in heaven, and he had to be cast out. He is here, mighty among the children of men. There is a vast number of fallen spirits, cast out with him, here on earth. They do not die and disappear; they have not bodies only as they enter the tabernacles of men. They have not organized bodies and are not to be seen with the sight of the eye. But there are many evil spirits among us, and they labor to overthrow the church and kingdom of God...Do you suppose these devils are around us without trying to do something?...I say... we have got a mighty warfare to wage with these spirits. We cannot escape it. What will they do to you? They will try to make us do anything, and everything that is not right. *The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, p. 238-240)

19 Therefore ye must always pray unto the Father in my name;

20 And ^awhatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is right, (Perfect prayers are always answered. Proper petitions are always granted. The Lord never rejects a prayer uttered by the power of the Spirit, or denies a petition sought in the name of Christ, that accords with the divine will. Bruce R. McConkie, *New Witness*, p. 384) believing that ye shall receive, behold it shall be given unto you.

(David E. Sorensen: “Christ taught the Nephites that prayer is more than just a means to receive our Father in Heaven’s generosity; rather, prayer itself is an act of faith as well as an act of righteousness... This is because the act of prayer itself can change and purify us, both individually and as a group. As our Bible Dictionary states, ‘The object of prayer is not to change the will of God, but to secure for ourselves and for others blessings that God is already willing to grant, but that are made conditional on our asking for them’ (p. 753). In other words, prayers bring our desires and the desires of our Father into harmony, thus bringing us both the blessing we are seeking and also the blessing of greater unity with the Father...The greatest blessing and benefit is not the physical or spiritual blessings that may come as answers to our prayers but in the changes to our soul that come as we learn to be dependent on our Heavenly Father for strength...The very act of praying will improve us. (*Ensign*, May 1993, pp. 30-1 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 437) Neal A. Maxwell: “Granted, finite minds do not fully understand the infinite mind of God. We are not fully comprehending when our agency brushes against His divinity. Yet we should trust Him as our provincial petitions meet His universal omniscience. ...It is necessary for us thus to place our desires and needs genuinely and unselfishly before God in prayer. It is in this process of placing our desires before Him, to a greater extent than we usually do, that we can listen and learn concerning His will. Such could not be done if we were ritualistically submissive or only partially involved. Of course, after we place our petitions before Him we are to be submissive: ‘Thy will be done.’ But this is the last part of the process of petition, not the first. Learning to pray is, therefore, the work of a lifetime. If we keep on praying, we will keep on discovering.” (*That Ye May Believe*, p. 179) “We may at times, if we are not careful, try to pray away pain or what seems like an impending tragedy, but which is, in reality, an opportunity. We must do as Jesus did in that respect-also preface our prayers by saying, ‘If it be possible,’ let the trial pass from us-by saying, ‘Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt,’ and bowing

in a sense of serenity to our Father in Heaven's wisdom, because at times God will not be able to let us pass by a trial or a challenge. If we were allowed to bypass certain trials, everything that had gone on up to that moment in our lives would be wiped out. It is because he loves us that at times he will not intercede as we may wish him to. That, too, we learn from Gethsemane and from Calvary. (*But for a Small Moment*, p. 445) "By praying, we begin to experience what it is like when we see the interplay of man's moral agency and God's directing hand. These are things to be learned only by experience. We learn how important our intentions are, since we are instructed to pray for that 'which is right' (3 Nephi 18:20). Our prayers will be better if they are in fact inspired prayers. Thus worshipping, serving, studying, praying, each in its own way squeezes selfishness out of us; it pushes aside our preoccupations with the things of the world." (*Men and Women of Christ*, p. 98))

21 ^aPray in your families unto the Father, always in my name, that your wives and your children may be blessed. (The importance of family prayer.)

22 And behold, ye shall ^ameet together oft; (Every Sunday) and ye shall not forbid any man from coming unto you when ye shall meet together, but suffer them that they may come unto you and forbid them not; ("The Savior's commandment to the Nephites to 'not forbid any man from coming unto you when ye shall meet together' has special application to us in the Church today. While we may not verbally 'forbid' others—members and nonmembers alike—from our fellowship in the Church, they may feel 'forbidden' by reason of our attitudes and our actions. Elder M. Russell Ballard observed: 'I believe we members do not have the option to extend the hand of fellowship only to relatives, close friends, certain Church members and those selected nonmembers who express an interest in the Church. Limiting or withholding our fellowship seems to me to be contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ.... We might ask ourselves how the newcomers in our wards would be treated if we were the only ones they ever met. Every member of the Church should foster the attributes of warmth, sincerity, and love for the newcomers.... 'Brothers and sisters, we members must help with the conversion process by making our wards and branches friendly places, with no exclusivity, where all people feel welcome and comfortable. . . . My message is urgent because we need to retain in full fellowship many more of the new converts and return to activity many more of the less active. I urge you to increase the spirit of friendship and pure Christian fellowship in your neighborhoods. A new convert or recently activated member should feel the warmth of being wanted and being welcomed into full fellowship of the Church. Members and leaders of the Church should nurture and love them as Jesus would.' ("The Hand of Fellowship," *Ensign*, November 1988, pp. 28-29.)" (McConkie, Millet, and Top, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 4, p. 127))

23 But ye shall ^apray for them, and shall not cast them out; and if it so be that they come unto you oft ye shall pray for them unto the Father, in my name.

24 Therefore, hold up your ^alight that it may shine unto the world. Behold I am the ^blight which ye shall hold up (First, individually, we hold up Christ as the light of the world in our lives as we take his name upon us, have his image engraven in our countenances by personifying his teachings and by receiving his Spirit. Second, as an institution the Church is commanded to hold Christ up to the world as the light that illuminates our way and gives life and meaning to all that we do. Reflecting the light of the world in the light of our lives and our ministry, we can invite all to come unto Christ and thereby see good works that are centered in Christ. We would hope they will then be moved to glorify the Father. DCBM, 4:127-28) —that which ye have seen me do. Behold ye see that I have prayed unto the Father, and ye all have witnessed.

25 And ye see that I have commanded that ^anone of you should go away, but rather have commanded that ye should come unto me, that ye might ^bfeel and see; (We invite investigators to come and see what they've never seen before and to feel what they've never felt before.) even so shall ye do unto the world; and whosoever breaketh this commandment suffereth himself to be led into temptation.

26 And now it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words, he turned his eyes again upon the ^aDisciples whom he had chosen, and said unto them:

27 Behold verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you another commandment, and then I must go unto my ^aFather that I may fulfil ^bother commandments which he hath given me.

28 And now behold, this is the commandment which I give unto you (The Twelve and other Church leaders.), that ye shall not suffer any one knowingly to ^apartake of my flesh and blood ^bunworthily, when ye shall minister it; (Spencer W. Kimball: “Long, long ago, there were some of the wards who refused to permit anyone other than a member of the Church to partake of the sacrament, with the thought that they were taking it unworthily. There are those who feel, as you have indicated, that little children should not partake of it. And, there are those who partake of it whenever it is passed regardless of how unworthy they may be but to save themselves embarrassment, I suppose.... The sacrament is to serve us in somewhat the same manner as the sacrifice did from Adam to Christ.... Both the sacrifice in the old days and the sacrament in our day are to keep us reminded of our covenants, that we will remember the sacrifice, that we are willing to take upon us the name of Christ, and that we will remember him and keep his commandments. The Lord, himself, said, ‘And now behold, this is the commandment which I give unto you, that ye shall not suffer any one knowingly to partake of my flesh and blood unworthily, when ye shall minister it... Therefore if ye know that a man is unworthy to eat and drink of my flesh and blood ye shall forbid him.’ (3 Nephi 18:28-29.) Apparently, he is not speaking of little children but of men who are accountable and responsible and who would defile themselves or the program and unworthily partake. Even in this case, he would not have the man cast out unless he was vicious.... The sacrament is for the Saints, for those who have actually made covenants at the waters of baptism primarily, but there is no evidence that I find where the Lord would ever exclude the children who were rapidly moving toward baptism and who were learning and being taught to worship the Lord and be ready for the covenants as their age and development would permit.... If a person, not a member of the Church, is in the congregation, we do not forbid him partaking of it, but would properly advise that the sacrament is for the renewing of covenants. And, since he has not made the true covenant of baptism or temple covenant, he is exempt. However, his partaking of the sacrament if he is clean and worthy and devout would not bring upon him any condemnation as it would for those who have made solemn covenants and then have ignored or defied them.” (*Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p. 226))

29 For whoso eateth and drinketh my flesh and ^ablood ^bunworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to his soul; therefore if ye know that a man is unworthy to eat and drink of my flesh and blood ye shall forbid him. (James E. Talmage: “The divine instructions concerning the sacredness of this ordinance are explicit; and the consequent need of scrupulous care being exercised lest it be engaged in unworthily is apparent. In addressing the Corinthian saints Paul gave solemn warnings against hasty or unworthy action in partaking of the sacrament, and declares that the penalties of sickness and even death are visited upon those who violate the sacred requirements: ‘For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.’ (1 Cor 11:26-30) When instructing the Nephites, Jesus laid great stress upon the fitness of those who partook of the sacrament; and moreover He placed responsibility upon the officers of the Church whose duty it was to administer it, that they should permit none whom they knew to be unworthy to participate in the ordinance.” (*The Articles of Faith*, p. 173) David O. McKay: “To partake of the sacrament unworthily is to take a step toward spiritual death. No man can be dishonest within himself without deadening the susceptibility of his spirit. Sin can stun the conscience as a blow on the head can stun the physical senses. He who promises one thing and deliberately fails to keep his word, adds sin to sin. On natural principles such a man ‘eats and drinks condemnation to his soul.’” (*Conference Report*, October 1929, pp. 14-15.) Elder John H. Groberg: “This invitation of the Savior to come unto him is issued regularly and is universal. Everyone is included—men, women, and children. Old and young alike participate. None are barred except by

themselves. The Lord said, 'And ye see that I have commanded that none of you should go away, but rather have commanded that ye should come unto me.' (3 Ne. 18:25.) But the Lord, who knows the terrible consequences of hypocrisy, also warned: 'Ye shall not suffer any one knowingly to partake of my flesh and blood unworthily, ... For whoso eateth and drinketh my flesh and blood unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to his soul.' (3 Ne. 18:28-29.) What does it mean to partake of the sacrament worthily? Or how do we know if we are unworthy? If we desire to improve (which is to repent) and are not under priesthood restriction, then, in my opinion, we are worthy. If, however, we have no desire to improve, if we have no intention of following the guidance of the Spirit, we must ask: Are we worthy to partake, or are we making a mockery of the very purpose of the sacrament, which is to act as a catalyst for personal repentance and improvement? If we remember the Savior and all he has done and will do for us, we will improve our actions and thus come closer to him, which keeps us on the road to eternal life. If, however, we refuse to repent and improve, if we do not remember him and keep his commandments, then we have stopped our growth, and that is damnation to our souls. The sacrament is an intensely personal experience, and we are the ones who knowingly are worthy or otherwise." (*Conference Report*, Apr. 1989, "The Beauty and Importance of the Sacrament") It is important to note that, in these verses, Jesus is speaking to the Apostles, those who have been commissioned and authorized to administer the sacrament. He is not speaking to the multitude. Forbidding someone from partaking of the sacrament on the grounds of personal unworthiness is the responsibility of the "judge in Israel" [Bishop, Stake President, etc.] who holds the keys of the priesthood which direct priesthood ordinances. It is not the prerogative of members of the congregation to forbid anyone from partaking of the sacrament. If they are aware of unworthiness, they may discuss it with the bishop or other appropriate priesthood leader, but it remains the right of the priesthood leader, through the spirit of discernment, to allow or disallow someone the blessing of the sacrament. DCBM, 4:129-30)

30 Nevertheless, ye shall not ^acast him out from among you, but ye shall ^bminister unto him and shall pray for him unto the Father, in my name; and if it so be that he repenteth and is baptized in my name, then shall ye receive him, and shall minister unto him of my flesh and blood.

31 But if he repent not he shall not be numbered among my people, that he may not destroy my people, for behold I ^aknow ^bmy sheep, and they are numbered.

32 Nevertheless, ye shall not cast him out of your ^asynagogues, or your places of worship, for unto such shall ye continue to minister; (Neal A. Maxwell: "Whatever the individual case, our task is to 'continue to minister' without cynically computing the odds, 'for unto such shall ye continue to minister; for ye know not but what they will return and repent, and come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I shall heal them; and ye shall be the means of bringing salvation unto them' (3 Nephi 18:32). Of course, the determined offenders may ignore even our best efforts. Being 'free to choose' for themselves, they may crash through all reproof and restraint. Nevertheless, in our sometimes collective failure to try at all, we all fail. Then we gather solemnly at the foot of the cliff, hoping to salvage something from the smoking, twisted human wreckage. Instead we might have been loving, restraining sentries atop the cliff, or workers called upon to oversee, repair, and replace the guardrails. You will be blessed to know how to proceed. Your love may not be reciprocated, but it will not be wasted. Don't fret over possible clumsiness on your part. Real love is felt even when it is poorly expressed. Furthermore, if we '[show] forth afterward an increase of love' (D&C 121:43) we will more likely be seen as a true friend and not an enemy. Never forget Jesus' encouragement and direction: 'Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother' (Matthew 18:15). No one is finally lost until we give up! May you 'gain' back your friend. Mind the moment, and eternity will take care of itself." (*That Ye May Believe*, p. 162-3)) for ye know not but what they will return and repent, and come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I shall ^bheal them; and ye shall be the means of bringing salvation unto them.

33 Therefore, keep these sayings which I have commanded you that ye come not under ^acondemnation; for wo unto him whom the Father condemneth.

34 And I give you these commandments because of the disputations which have been among you. And blessed are ye if ye have ^ano disputations among you.

35 And now I go unto the Father, because it is expedient that I should go unto the Father ^afor your sakes.

36 And it came to pass that when Jesus had made an end of these sayings, he touched with his ^ahand the ^bDisciples^c whom he had chosen, one by one, (He ministers unto us one by one.) even until he had touched (laying on of hands) them all, and spake unto them as he touched them.

37 And the multitude heard not the words which he spake, therefore they did not bear record; but the Disciples bare record that he gave them ^apower to give the ^bHoly Ghost. And I will show unto you ^chereafter that this record is true.

38 And it came to pass that when Jesus had touched them all, there came a ^acloud and overshadowed the multitude that they could not see Jesus. (The words spoken by Christ to the Twelve – which were not heard by the multitude – were preserved. See Moroni 2. DCBM 4:131)

39 And while they were overshadowed he ^adeparted from them, and ascended into heaven. And the Disciples saw and did bear record that he ascended again into heaven. (End of day 1)

CHAPTER 19

The Twelve Disciples minister unto the people and pray for the Holy Ghost—They are baptized and receive the Holy Ghost and the ministering of angels—Jesus prays using words that cannot be written—He attests to the exceedingly great faith of these Nephites. [A.D. 34]

1 AND now it came to pass that when Jesus had ascended into heaven, the multitude did disperse, and every man did take his wife and his children and did return to his own home.

2 And it was noised abroad among the people immediately, before it was yet dark, that the multitude had seen Jesus, and that he had ministered unto them, and that he would also show himself on the ^amorrow unto the multitude.

3 Yea, and even all the night it was noised abroad concerning Jesus; (Hugh Nibley: “Now there's a reminder of that exciting passage from Thucydides where it says ‘that night, no man slept.’ It's like Christmas Eve—the tremendous excitement about the great thing that's going to happen tomorrow. Everybody is rushing around spreading the news: The Lord has finally come. He's going to be here tomorrow... The multitude dispersed. Everybody went home, but they didn't go to bed... A great thing is going to happen; we're going to receive a great gift tomorrow. We're going to get the gospel tomorrow. They're all excited about it. As I said, not a man slept.” (Teachings of the Book of Mormon, lecture 85, p. 355)) and insomuch did they send forth unto the people that there were many, yea, an exceedingly great number, did labor exceedingly all that night, that they might be on the morrow in the place where Jesus should show himself unto the multitude.

4 And it came to pass that on the morrow, when the multitude was gathered together, behold, Nephi and his ^abrother whom he had raised from the ^bdead, whose name was Timothy, and also his son, whose name was Jonas, and also Mathoni, and Mathonihah, his brother, and Kumen, and Kumenonhi, and Jeremiah, and Shemnon, and Jonas, and Zedekiah, and Isaiah—now these were the ^cnames of the ^ddisciples (Twelve Apostles) whom Jesus had chosen—and it came to pass that they went forth and stood in the midst of the multitude.

5 And behold, the multitude was ^aso great that they did cause that they should be separated into twelve bodies.

6 And the twelve did teach the multitude; and behold, they did cause that the multitude should ^akneel down upon the face of the earth, and should pray unto the Father in the name of Jesus.

7 And the disciples did pray unto the Father also in the name of Jesus. And it came to pass that they arose and ministered unto the people.

8 And when they had ministered those same words which Jesus had spoken—nothing varying from the

words which Jesus had spoken—behold, they knelt again and prayed to the Father in the name of Jesus.
9 And they did pray for that which they most desired; and they desired that the ^aHoly Ghost should be given unto them. (Jeffrey R. Holland: “As Christ had not yet appeared to them for this second day (and because the Father and Son could not permanently be with them—or us—in a telestial world), the next best companionship came from that member of the Godhead who can be with mortals permanently—the Holy Ghost. In their ministry these newly called apostles could not always have the daily, physical presence of the Savior with them. Nevertheless, because they were to lead the Church of Jesus Christ in righteousness and be witnesses of his name throughout the Nephite world, they would surely need the prompting, the protection, the revelation, and the comfort of that One who is the spiritual extension and telestial representative of the Father and the Son. In our own time the Prophet Joseph Smith was asked wherein The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints differed from other religions of the day. He replied that the distinction lay in ‘the gift of the Holy Ghost’ and that all other considerations ‘were contained in that gift.’ In light of these experiences—ancient or modern, Old World or New—perhaps all disciples of Christ, all members of his true Church, should pray for the influence and guidance of the Holy Ghost as that heavenly gift ‘which they most desire.’” (*Christ And The New Covenant*, p. 278) Bruce R. McConkie: “This morning, if I might be guided by the Spirit, I would like to suggest to you a slogan which, in my judgment, is one which will guide and direct and control and influence in all the affairs of our lives, in all things both temporal and spiritual. In the Southern Australian Mission we thought we would choose a slogan that would guide and direct in our missionary affairs, and then in all else. We knew that when the Nephite disciples, the twelve, had prayed for that which they most desired, the record said they most desired that they might have the Holy Ghost. (See. 3 Nephi 19:9.) So we sought to make their goal our goal, and we chose the slogan, ‘Seek the Spirit.’ Now we knew that Joseph Smith had said: ‘The Holy Ghost is a Revelator, and any man who has received the Holy Ghost has received revelation.’ So we thought if we could attune our souls sufficiently to the infinite, to be able to have in our lives the full exercise of the gift that had been given us in connection with baptism, that we would be guided aright in all things. I suggest this as the goal which all men in this world should follow—Seek the Spirit: desire above all things in this life to be guided by the Holy Ghost.” (*BYU Speeches*, September 29, 1964, p. 2) “The greatest gift a man can receive in this life is the gift of the Holy Ghost, even as the greatest gift he can gain in eternity is eternal life (D&C 14:7).” (*Sermons and Writings of Bruce R. McConkie*, p. 146) Ed J. Pinegar: “Why would the Nephites desire the Holy Ghost so fervently? Elder Parley P. Pratt answered this question when he described the extraordinary characteristics of this remarkable power: The gift of the Holy Ghost . . . quickens all the intellectual faculties, increases, enlarges, expands, and purifies all the natural passions and affections, and adapts them by the gift of wisdom to their lawful use. It inspires virtue, kindness, goodness, tenderness, gentleness, and charity. It develops beauty of person, form and features. It tends to health, vigor, animation, and social feeling. It develops and invigorates all the faculties of the physical and intellectual man. It strengthens, invigorates, and gives tone to the nerves. In short, it is, as it were, marrow to the bone, joy to the heart, light to the eyes, music to the ears, and life to the whole being.’ (*Key to Theology*, 1978, pp. 101-2)” (Especially for Missionaries, vol. 4, p. 2-3)

10 And when they had thus prayed they went down unto the water’s edge, and the multitude followed them.

11 And it came to pass that Nephi went down ^ainto the water and was ^bbaptized.

12 And he came up out of the water and began to baptize. And he baptized all those whom Jesus had chosen.

13 And it came to pass when they were all baptized and had come ^aup out of the water, the ^bHoly Ghost did fall upon them, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost and with fire. (After the crucifixion of the Savior there came a new order of things. The law of Moses came to an end, and with it, sacrifice of animals ceased, and the fulness of the gospel was ushered in. Therefore in this new order it became necessary for all those who had been previously baptized to be baptized again. Therefore in the new

order, Jesus commanded Nephi to be baptized and also the other brethren of the twelve. Following this all of the people were baptized. The conferring of the gift of the Holy Ghost would naturally follow, except in the case of those who had been previously baptized and confirmed. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 4:96-97. We have a similar condition in this dispensation. The Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were baptized by command of the Angel John the Baptist. Several others were baptized before the organization of the Church. However, on the day the church was organized, all who had been previously baptized were baptized again, not for the remission of sins, but for entrance into the Church. In each case the reason was the same. *IBID*, 3:205-206.)

14 And behold, they were ^aencircled about as if it were by fire; and it came down from heaven, and the multitude did witness it, and did bear record; and angels did come down out of heaven and did minister unto them.

15 And it came to pass that while the angels were ministering unto the disciples, behold, Jesus came and stood in the midst and ministered unto them.

16 And it came to pass that he spake unto the multitude, and commanded them that they should kneel down again upon the earth, and also that his disciples should kneel down upon the earth.

17 And it came to pass that when they had all knelt down upon the earth, he commanded his disciples that they should pray.

18 And behold, they began to pray; and they did pray unto Jesus, calling him their Lord and their God. (Jesus was present before them as the symbol of the Father. Seeing him, it was as though they saw the Father; praying to him, it was as though they prayed to the Father. It was a special and unique situation that as far as we know has taken place only once on earth during all the long ages of the Lord's hand-dealings with his children. Bruce R. McConkie, *Promised Messiah*, p. 561)

19 And it came to pass that Jesus departed out of the midst of them, and went a little way off from them and ^abowed himself to the earth, and he said: (Joseph Smith: "The saints have a sure foundation laid for the exercise of faith unto life and salvation, through the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ; by whose blood they have a forgiveness of sins, and also a sure reward laid up for them in heaven, even that of partaking of the fullness of the Father and the Son through the Spirit. As the Son partakes of the fullness of the Father through the Spirit, so the saints are, by the same Spirit, to be partakers of the same fullness, to enjoy the same glory; for as the Father and the Son are one, so, in like manner, the saints are to be one in them. Through the love of the Father, the mediation of Jesus Christ, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, they are to be heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ." (*Lectures on Faith*, p. 49))

20 Father, I thank thee that thou hast given the Holy Ghost unto these whom I have ^achosen; and it is because of their belief in me that I have chosen them out of the world.

21 Father, I pray thee that thou wilt give the Holy Ghost unto all them that shall believe in their words.

22 Father, thou hast given them the Holy Ghost because they believe in ^ame; and thou seest that they believe in me because thou hearest them, and they pray unto me; and they pray unto me because I am with them. (D&C 109 Joseph Smith prays unto Jehovah during the dedicatory prayer of the Temple.)

23 And now Father, I ^apray unto thee for them, and also for all those who shall believe on their words (Jesus is praying for us.), that they may believe in me, that I may be in them ^bas thou, Father, art in me, that we may be ^cone. (Jeffrey R. Holland: "That is, of course, a variation on the great intercessory prayer Christ offered for his disciples on the eve of his crucifixion in the Old World, praying that his followers might be unified with the Father and the Son, as well as with each other, and be taken from the adverse temptations and evil influences of the world. (Jn 17) From the Savior's language, we see clearly it is the Holy Ghost that provides such unity, a doctrinal point not so clearly communicated in the New Testament account." (*Christ And The New Covenant*, p. 280))

24 And it came to pass that when Jesus had thus prayed unto the Father, he came unto his disciples, and behold, they did still continue, without ceasing, to pray unto him; and they did not ^amultiply many words, for it was given unto them what they should ^bpray, (Neal A. Maxwell: "If we can achieve a significant milestone in discipleship, we will find that 'he that asketh in the Spirit asketh according to

the will of God; wherefore it is done even as he asketh.' (D&C 46:30.) In that stage of advanced allegiance, Jesus' disciples prayed not only 'without ceasing' but 'they did not multiply many words, for it was given unto them what they should pray, and they were filled with desire.' (3 Nephi 19:24.) Some of us seem to 'multiply words' even in brief pro-forma prayers; the above insights serve as sobering reminders as to how far that milestone—which marks pure motivation—is down the straight and narrow path; yet what exquisite ecstasy awaits those of us who will press forward and so purify ourselves so that our behavior is based on Christ-like motives."(*A Time To Choose*, p. 29 – 30) Perfect prayers are those which are inspired, in which the Spirit reveals the words which should be used. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 586) and they were filled with desire.

25 And it came to pass that Jesus blessed them as they did pray unto him; and his ^acountenance did smile upon them, and the light of his ^bcountenance did ^cshine upon them, and behold they were as ^dwhite as the countenance and also the garments of Jesus; and behold the whiteness thereof did exceed all the whiteness, yea, even there could be nothing upon earth so white as the whiteness thereof. (Truman Madsen: "Artists have often depicted this recognition of light as divine beauty by the halo, the nimbus, and the golden circle above the head. But that is at best a token of the promise and the actuality. For 'whole bodies' are promised illumination, and the light not only hovers over but also surrounds and engulfs the entire personality until it is gloriously beautiful. It was, after all, every one of the multitude, and all of each of them, even the seams of their clothing, that became scintillant with white light in the presence of Christ during that 'ineffable outpouring of prayer,' as Elder James E. Talmage calls it, in the 3 Nephi narrative (see 3 Nephi 19:25). Modern men and women of God who have witnessed such radiance of soul say it is 'like a search light turned on within.' It is 'the same glorious spirit,' the Prophet once wrote, 'gives them the likeness of glory and bloom. ... No man can describe it to you-no man can write it.' (*Teachings*, p. 368) Aesthetic delight, then, whatever else it is, is delight in light. And it is surely significant that the whole color spectrum, every vivid color of the rainbow, harmonizes in white light which, in turn, harmonizes in Christ." (Truman G. Madsen, *The Radiant Light*, p. 26-7))

26 And Jesus said unto them: Pray on; nevertheless they did not cease to pray.

27 And he turned from them again, and went a little way off and bowed himself to the earth; and he prayed again unto the Father, saying:

28 Father, I thank thee that thou hast ^apurified those whom I have chosen, because of their faith, and I pray for them, and also for them who shall believe on their words, that they may be purified in me, through faith on their words, even as they are purified in me.

29 Father, I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me ^aout of the world, because of their faith, that they may be purified in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father, art in me, that we may be one, that I may be glorified in them. (Jeffrey R. Holland: The beautiful prayer of the Savior recorded in 3 Nephi 19 may or may not have been heard (or recorded) by those who were present. Someone might have heard that prayer and recorded it, or the Master may have repeated it a second time for the historical record. But another possibility for such private declarations running throughout the Book of Mormon is that the Spirit simply revealed in every necessary detail what Mormon – and we – needed to know. Obviously nothing was to be lost that would be essential to the latter-day message, no matter how privately it may have been uttered initially. *The Book of Mormon: It Begins with a Family*, 225)

30 And when Jesus had spoken these words he came again unto his disciples; and behold they did pray steadfastly, without ceasing, unto him; and he did smile upon them again; (As I entered the door, I saw, seated on a raised platform, the most glorious Being my eyes have ever beheld or that I ever conceived existed in all the eternal worlds. As I approached to be introduced, he arose and stepped towards me with extended arms, and he smiled as he softly spoke my name. If I shall live to be a million years old, I shall never forget that smile. He took me into his arms and kissed me, pressed me to his bosom, and blessed me, until the marrow of my bones seemed to melt! When he had finished, I knelt at his feet, and, as I bathed them with my tears and kisses, I saw the prints of the nails in the feet of the Redeemer of the world. The feeling that I had in the presence of him who hath all things in his hands, to have his love, his

affection, and his blessing was such that if I ever can receive that of which I had but a foretaste, I would give all that I am, all that I ever hope to be, to feel what I then felt. Elder Melvin J. Ballard, *Sermons and Missionary Service of Melvin J. Ballard*, p. 155-56) and behold they were ^awhite, even as Jesus.

31 And it came to pass that he went again a little way off and prayed unto the Father;

32 And tongue cannot speak the words which he prayed, neither can be ^awritten by man the words which he prayed.

33 And the multitude did hear and do bear record; and their ^ahearts were open and they did understand in their hearts the words which he prayed. (Dallin H. Oaks: "In describing the state of the inner man, the scriptures commonly use the word heart. This word occurs over a thousand times in the standard works, almost always as a figurative expression. Heart is often used to identify the extent to which one is receptive to the message of the gospel. Nephi said, 'The Lord . . . did visit me, and did soften my heart that I did believe' (1 Nephi 2:16). A later Nephi described his preaching to a people who 'did harden their hearts and did not hearken unto the words of the Lord' (Helaman 10:13) Heart is sometimes used as a synonym for mind. Speaking of the multitude who heard the risen Lord on this continent, the Book of Mormon says, 'neither can the hearts of men conceive so great and marvelous things as we both saw and heard Jesus speak' (3 Nephi 17:17). 'Their hearts were open and they did understand in their hearts the words which he prayed' (3 Nephi 19:33). Heart is also used in contrast to mind, with mind apparently connoting the powers of reasoning (the intellectual) and heart connoting the powers of intuition (the spiritual). President Harold B. Lee used those two words in this contrasting sense when he said: 'When we understand more than we know with our minds, when we understand with our hearts, then we know that the Spirit of the Lord is working upon us' (Harold B. Lee, *Stand Ye in Holy Places* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1974], p. 92).") (*Pure in Heart*, Preface))

34 Nevertheless, so great and marvelous were the words which he prayed that they cannot be written, neither can they be ^auttered by man.

35 And it came to pass that when Jesus had made an end of praying he came again to the disciples, and said unto them: ^aSo great ^bfaith have I never seen among all the Jews; wherefore I could not show unto them so great ^cmiracles, because of their ^dunbelief. ("This greater ability of the Nephites to receive the gospel is shown also in the fact that in the New Testament there are about forty parables which Jesus used because so many of the Jews were slow to perceive spiritual things, whereas in 3 Nephi Jesus used no parables among the Nephites because he was able to give them the gospel in direct and plainly spoken words." (*Book of Mormon Symposium Series*, 3 Ne 9-30, edited by PR Cheesman, MS Nyman, and CD Tate, Jr., 1988, p. 29) As great as were the miracles performed by Jesus among the Jews during his mortal ministry, they could not compare with the marvelous things seen, heard, and experienced by the Nephites. The great miracles and spiritual manifestations to which the Nephites were witnesses came as a result of their faith. Where there is greater faith there are greater miracles and spiritual outpourings. DCBM, 4:137. It seems that the descendants of Joseph may be more spiritually gifted than the descendants of Judah.)

36 Verily I say unto you, there are none of them that have seen so great things as ye have seen; neither have they heard so great things as ye have heard.