



The Stick of Joseph: another Testament of Jesus Christ

St George 5th Ward

He Inviteth All to Come unto Him

Lesson 10

INTRODUCTION

A statement by Elder Gene R. Cook:

"Last summer on a lonely stretch of desert highway, we saw ahead what appeared to be the road covered with water. My children would have wagered their entire savings on that fact. But within a few minutes we were at the distant spot and saw not one drop of water. What an illusion!

"How many things there are in this life that appear to be one way and all of a sudden are the reverse. ... Satan operates that way. He is the master of illusion. He creates illusions in an attempt to detour, dilute, and divert the power and the attention of the Latter-day Saints from the pure truth of God" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1982, 35-36; or Ensign, May 1982, 25).

- What is an illusion?
- What are some illusions that Satan uses to lead people astray?
- How can we discern between these illusions and the truth?

NEPHI PROPHECIES OF THE SAVIOR'S MINISTRY AMONG THE NEPHITES. 2 Nephi 26

Nephi foresaw that before the Savior visited the Nephites, there would be "great wars and contentions" for many generations (2 Nephi 26:1-2). He prophesied that between the time of Christ's death and His ministry among the Nephites, the wicked would be destroyed (2 Nephi 26:3-7).

- How did Nephi describe those who would be preserved at the Savior's coming? (2 Nephi 26:8.)
- Why are these same qualities important for us today?
- How were the righteous Nephites and their posterity blessed? (2 Nephi 26:9.)
- What did Nephi prophesy would happen after four generations of peace and righteousness after the Savior visited this people? (2 Nephi 26:10.)
- What would cause this destruction? (2 Nephi 26:10-11.)
- Why is pride such a serious sin?
- What can we do in our lives to keep the Spirit of the Lord with us?
- *How did Nephi describe the way Satan leads people to destruction?* (2 Nephi 26:22.)
- *What are some ways Satan uses "flaxen cords" before binding people with "strong cords"?*
- *How did Nephi describe the way the Savior leads people to salvation?* (2 Nephi 26:23-27, 33.)

- *How can we help others "partake of his salvation"?* (2 Nephi 26:24.)
- Nephi warned against priestcrafts. *What are priestcrafts?* (2 Nephi 26:29; Alma 1:16.)
- *What examples of priestcraft are evident in the world today?*
- *How can we counteract these conditions?* (2 Nephi 26:30-31; 3 Nephi 18:24; Moroni 7:45-47.)

NEPHI TESTIFIES OF THE COMING FORTH OF THE BOOK OF MORMON. 2 Nephi 27

- Chapter 27 contains further prophecies about the last days. The following events described in 2 Nephi 27 have been fulfilled in this dispensation.

- **An ancient book would be delivered to a man for translation.** (2 Nephi 27:9).
 {}=> *What was in this book?* (2 Nephi 27:6.)
 {}=> *What reason did the Lord give for choosing a young, unlearned man to translate the Book of Mormon?* (2 Nephi 27:19-23.)



- **A portion of the words of the book would be shown to a learned man, who would ask to see the book.** (2 Nephi 27:15).
 {}=> *What event was prophesied in these verses?* (Joseph Smith—History 1:63-65.)
 {}=> *Why did the learned man want to see the book?* (2 Nephi 27:16.)
 {}=> *In what ways might the Book of Mormon be "sealed" from those who seek the glory of the world?*

- **Witnesses would testify of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon** (2 Nephi 27:12-14).
 {}=> *Why was it important for witnesses to see the plates?* (Ether 5:2-4; 2 Corinthians 13:1.)



- ◆ **The power of the Book of Mormon would be manifest in people's lives** (2 Nephi 27:26, 29-30, 35).
{ }=> What changes have you seen in your life or the lives of others because of the power of the Book of Mormon?

NEPHI PROPHECIES THAT SATAN WILL SPREAD FALSE DOCTRINES IN THE LAST DAYS. 2 Nephi 28

- ◆ **How did Nephi's prophesy that in the last days people would deny the power of God and teach false, vain, and foolish doctrines fulfilled?** (2 Nephi 28:3-9; 2 Nephi 26:20-21).
- ◆ **How was this condition prevalent in Joseph Smith's time?** (Joseph Smith—History 1:5-6, 19, 21.)
- ◆ **How is it prevalent today?**
- ◆ **How did Nephi describe the false teaching that people would use to justify sinning?** (2 Nephi 28:7-9.)
- ◆ **What are some of the rationalizations people use today to excuse sin?**
- ◆ **What are the dangers of not worrying about "committing a little sin"?** (2 Nephi 28:8).
- ◆ **What did Nephi also foresee as a major stumblingblock of the people in the last days?** (2 Nephi 28:12-15).
- ◆ **What was the eventual result of the pride of the Nephites?** (2 Nephi 26:10-11.)
- ◆ **How is pride a stumbling block to our spiritual growth? How can we overcome pride?**
- ◆ **How might a desire for "fine clothing" or other luxuries cause us to neglect the poor?** (2 Nephi 28:13)
- ◆ **In what ways can we help those who are less fortunate, both physically and spiritually?**
- ◆ According to Nephi, how would many people react to the word of the Lord in the last days? (2 Nephi 28:20, 28.)
- ◆ **Why do the words of God often "stir [many] up to anger against that which is good"?**
- ◆ Nephi prophesied that Satan would pacify the people and "lull them away into carnal security" (2 Nephi 28:21). What is carnal security?
- ◆ **How can the contentment of carnal security keep us from repentance?**
- ◆ **What does the phrase "leadeth them away carefully" (2 Nephi 28:21) suggest about Satan's tactics?**

Elder James E. Faust shared the following analogy: "Thomas R. Rowan ... said: 'Author and commentator Malcolm Muggeridge once told a story about some frogs who were killed without resistance by being boiled alive in [a] cauldron of water. Why didn't they resist? Because when they were put in the cauldron, the water was tepid. Then the temperature was raised ever so slightly, ... then a bit warmer still, and on and on and on. The change was so gradual, almost imperceptible, that the frogs accommodated themselves to their new environment—until it was too late. The point that Mr. Muggeridge was making was not about frogs but about us and how we tend to accept evil as long as it is not a shock that is thrust on us abruptly. We are inclined to accept something morally wrong if it is only a shade more wrong than something we are already accepting'" (National Press Club Forum).

After sharing this analogy, Elder Faust said, "This gradual process was foretold by ancient prophets" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 40; or Ensign, May 1989, 32).

- ◆ How did Nephi describe the ways that Satan would "flatter" some

people? (2 Nephi 28:22.)

- ◆ **Why do you think Satan would want us to believe that there is no devil and no hell?**
- ◆ **How can studying the Book of Mormon help us be spiritually alert and avoid becoming "at ease in Zion"?** (2 Nephi 28:24).

President Ezra Taft Benson said: "The Book of Mormon exposes the enemies of Christ. It confounds false doctrines and lays down contention. (See 2 Ne. 3:12.) It fortifies the humble followers of Christ against the evil designs, strategies, and doctrines of the devil in our day. The type of apostates in the Book of Mormon are similar to the type we have today. God, with his infinite foreknowledge, so molded the Book of Mormon that we might see the error and know how to combat false educational, political, religious, and philosophical concepts of our time" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1975, 94-95; or Ensign, May 1975, 64).

NEPHI TEACHES ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BOOK OF MORMON. 2 Nephi 29-30

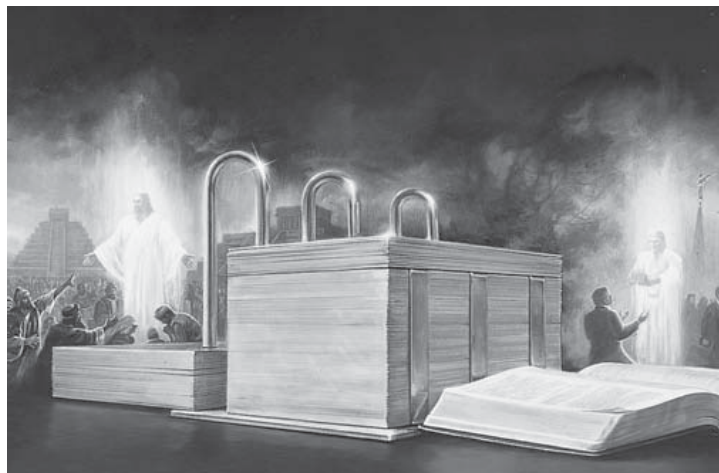
- ◆ Why will some people in the last days reject the Book of Mormon? (2 Nephi 29:3; 2 Nephi 28:29.)
- ◆ **Why should we study the Book of Mormon in addition to the Bible?** (2 Nephi 29:4-14; 2 Nephi 28:30.)
- ◆ **In what work did Nephi prophesy that the Book of Mormon would be successful?** (2 Nephi 30:3),
- ◆ **To what groups was the message meant?** (2 Nephi 30:3-6)
- ◆ **What is the message of the the Book of Mormon?** (2 Nephi 30:7)
- ◆ How are these prophecies beginning to be fulfilled?

"A GREAT DIVISION AMONG THE PEOPLE" (2 Nephi 30:10-18)

- ◆ Nephi prophesied that before the Millennium the Lord would "cause a great division among the people" (2 Nephi 30:10).
- ◆ How did Nephi describe that division? (2 Nephi 30:10.)
- ◆ What are some of the blessings the righteous will enjoy in the Millennium? (2 Nephi 30:12-18.)

CONCLUSION

Through studying the Book of Mormon and living the gospel, we will gain the power to avoid Satan's deceptive illusions and be guided as we strive to stay on the strait and narrow path. Challenge class members to study the Book of Mormon individually and with their families so that they may receive the blessings the Lord has promised to the righteous.



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