

Comments on 3 Nephi 26

This chapter concludes Jesus' second day of his teaching the Lehites (v. 1-5). Mormon makes some comments on the material he selectively edited (v. 6-13), and includes the final events of the second day (v. 14-15). He briefly mentions some events of the third day of Jesus' visit (v. 16). He then informs us concerning the start of the church among the Lehites (v. 17-21).

1 AND now it came to pass that when Jesus had told these things he expounded them unto the multitude; and he did expound all things unto them, both great and small. 2 And he saith: These scriptures, which ye had not with you, the Father commanded that I should give unto you; for it was wisdom in him that they should be given unto future generations.

3 And he did expound all things, even from the beginning until the time that he should come in his glory--yea, even all things which should come upon the face of the earth, even until the elements should melt with fervent heat, and the earth should be wrapt together as a scroll, and the heavens and the earth should pass away;

4 And even unto the great and last day, when all people, and all kindreds, and all nations and tongues shall stand before God, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil-- 5 If they be good, to the resurrection of everlasting life; and if they be evil, to the resurrection of damnation; being on a parallel, the one on the one hand and the other on the other hand, according to the mercy, and the justice, and the holiness which is in Christ, who was before the world began.

v1-5 After Jesus quotes the writings of Malachi he explains the meaning of them (v. 1), and then restates the necessity of them receiving these things so they will go to future generations (v. 2, cp. 23:4).

Mormon then briefly summarizes the things Jesus taught them. This included everything from the Creation to the Day of the Lord (v. 3), and the resurrection and Final Judgement (v. 4-5).

6 And now there cannot be written in this book even a hundredth part of the things which Jesus did truly teach unto the people; 7 But behold the plates of Nephi do contain the more part of the things which he taught the people. 8 And these things have I written, which are a lesser part of the things which he taught the people; and I have written them to the intent that they may be brought again unto this people, from the Gentiles, according to the words which Jesus hath spoken. 9 And when they shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things then shall the greater things be made manifest unto them.

10 And if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation. 11 Behold, I was about to write them, all which were engraven upon the plates of Nephi, but the Lord forbade it, saying: I will try the faith of my people. 12 Therefore I, Mormon, do write the things which have been commanded me of the

Lord. And now I, Mormon, make an end of my sayings, and proceed to write the things which have been commanded me.

13 Therefore, I would that ye should behold that the Lord truly did teach the people, for the space of three days; and after that he did show himself unto them oft, and did break bread oft, and bless it, and give it unto them.

v6-13 Mormon parenthetically explains it would not be possible to write down everything Jesus taught them (v. 6), but there is a more detailed account on the large plates of Nephi (v. 7). What he has written himself is not as detailed as what is on the large plates of Nephi.

His intent is to write those things which must go forth to the remnants of the Lehites through the Gentiles in the future (v. 8). When the remnants of the Lehites receive this record, if they believe it then they will have greater things revealed to them (v. 9). But, if they do not accept this record, then the greater things will not be revealed to them (v. 10).

Mormon then explains he was intending to write a more detailed account of the things Jesus taught, but he was forbidden to do so because the people's faith may be tested beforehand (v. 11). So, Mormon writes what he is told to (v. 12), and then makes it clear Jesus appeared to them three days to teach them, and thereafter appeared to them to administer the sacrament to them (v. 13).

v9 "greater things shall be made manifest unto them", the footnotes on the 1981 edition Book of Mormon contain references to passages dealing with the sealed portion of the plates. This passage might be referring to the revelation of the sealed portion of the plates, but it may not. The phrase "greater things" is defined in Ether 4:13 as "knowledge which is hid up because of unbelief", which is ambiguous. Moroni says of the vision of the brother of Jared "there never were greater things made manifest", cf. Ether 4:4. Samuel said the angel told him there would be many people who saw "great things", speaking in reference to the signs of Christ's birth and death, cf. Hela. 14:28. So, the phrase "greater things" doesn't necessarily refer to the revelation of the sealed plates.

14 And it came to pass that he did teach and minister unto the children of the multitude of whom hath been spoken, and he did loose their tongues, and they did speak unto their fathers great and marvelous things, even greater than he had revealed unto the people; and he loosed their tongues that they could utter. 15 And it came to pass that after he had ascended into heaven—the second time that he showed himself unto them, and had gone unto the Father, after having healed all their sick, and their lame, and opened the eyes of their blind and unstopped the ears of the deaf, and even had done all manner of cures among them, and raised a man from the dead, and had shown forth his power unto them, and had ascended unto the Father—

v14-15 After teaching the people, Jesus looses the tongues of little children and babies among the multitude (v. 14) and heals various sick and afflicted people, even raising one from the dead (v. 15).

16 Behold, it came to pass on the morrow that the multitude gathered themselves together, and they both saw and heard these children; yea, even babes did open their mouths and utter marvelous things; and the things which they did utter were forbidden that there should not any man write them.

v16 On the third day, the entire multitude witnesses firsthand the babies and little children speaking astounding things. What they say is even more than Jesus told them the day before, and the result is people are forbidden from writing it down.

While v. 14 and 16 appear to be talking about the same thing, careful reading shows the audiences for the talking children has changed. In v. 14 it says "they did speak unto their fathers great and marvelous things", but in v. 16 it says "the multitude...saw and heard these children". Verse 14 being at the end of day two and v. 16 being on day three.

17 And it came to pass that the disciples whom Jesus had chosen began from that time forth to baptize and to teach as many as did come unto them; and as many as were baptized in the name of Jesus were filled with the Holy Ghost. 18 And many of them saw and heard unspeakable things, which are not lawful to be written. 19 And they taught, and did minister one to another; and they had all things common among them, every man dealing justly, one with another. 20 And it came to pass that they did do all things even as Jesus had commanded them. 21 And they who were baptized in the name of Jesus were called the church of Christ.

v17-21 After the initial three days of Jesus' teaching among the Lehites, the twelve disciples teach and baptize the people. Those who are baptized are filled with the Spirit (v. 17) and see and hear things which are not to be written down (v. 18).

Those in the church practice the Law of Consecration to the fullest extent and have a Zion community (v. 19) doing all things Jesus taught them (v. 20).

All who are baptized are referred to as "those called of Christ" or "the church of Christ" (v. 21).

v19 This Zion community eventually spreads to encompass all Lehites, cf. 4 Ne. 1:1-3.

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