

General Comments on 3 Nephi 29-30

These two chapters largely repeat the message of ch. 21. However, in ch. 21 Jesus' target audience was natural Israel and the message is largely one of encouragement and redemption, here Mormon's message is one of warning and woe to the Gentiles.

Mormon is expanding on the theme of 28:27-35, where the three disciples will perform a great and marvelous work among the Gentiles. If the Gentiles reject the great and marvelous work and continue to rebel against the Lord they will be punished when Israel is redeemed.

Comments on 3 Nephi 29

1 AND now behold, I say unto you that when the Lord shall see fit, in his wisdom, that these sayings shall come unto the Gentiles according to his word, then ye may know that the covenant which the Father hath made with the children of Israel, concerning their restoration to the lands of their inheritance, is already beginning to be fulfilled. 2 And ye may know that the words of the Lord, which have been spoken by the holy prophets, shall all be fulfilled; and ye need not say that the Lord delays his coming unto the children of Israel. 3 And ye need not imagine in your hearts that the words which have been spoken are vain, for behold, the Lord will remember his covenant which he hath made unto his people of the house of Israel.

v1-3 The delivery of these words to the Gentiles is a sign that the Lord has begun the gathering of Israel (v. 1, cp. 21:1-7) according to the predictions of all the Old Testament Prophets (v. 2, cp. 21:8-21). Mormon then warns the Gentiles away from thinking the words spoken by these prophets are meaningless, because the Lord will keep the covenants made with Israel (v. 3, cp. 21:26-29).

4 And when ye shall see these sayings coming forth among you, then ye need not any longer spurn at the doings of the Lord, for the sword of his justice is in his right hand; and behold, at that day, if ye shall spurn at his doings he will cause that it shall soon overtake you. 5 Wo unto him that spurneth at the doings of the Lord; yea, wo unto him that shall deny the Christ and his works! 6 Yea, wo unto him that shall deny the revelations of the Lord, and that shall say the Lord no longer worketh by revelation, or by prophecy, or by gifts, or by tongues, or by healings, or by the power of the Holy Ghost! 7 Yea, and wo unto him that shall say at that day, to get gain, that there can be no miracle wrought by Jesus Christ; for he that doeth this shall become like unto the son of perdition, for whom there was no mercy, according to the word of Christ!

8 Yea, and ye need not any longer hiss, nor spurn, nor make game of the Jews, nor any of the remnant of the house of Israel; for behold, the Lord remembereth his covenant unto them, and he will do unto them according to that which he hath sworn. 9 Therefore ye need not suppose that ye can turn the right hand of the Lord unto the left, that he may not execute judgment unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he hath made unto the house of Israel.

v4-7 Mormon predicts the Gentiles will generally reject the great and marvelous work of the Lord because of greed. They will spurn and reject the great and marvelous work, to their own condemnation (v. 4), because they deny Christ (v. 5) and all his revelations and works (v. 6). The Gentiles who do this become like the son of Perdition who sold out Christ for personal profit, so they will obtain no mercy from him (v. 7).

v8-9 Where the Gentiles were formerly used to punish and afflict the Israelites as part of a covenant malediction (cf. 1 Ne. 13), when the remnants of Israel return to the Lord then their persecution of Israel must stop (v. 8). Nothing they do can change the Lord's will or stop Him from fulfilling His promises (v. 9).

As indicated in v. 4-7, the Gentile nations are committing all the same sins Israel has committed over the years: secularism, materialism, priestcraft, and rebellion. But, in addition to this, the Gentiles have persecuted Israel. The result is the Lord will not spare them, cp. Ezek. 35:1-5. While the Gentiles haven't gotten any worse than Israel, they have no covenant to protect them when they do go bad.

The underlying premise is that of the times of the Gentiles (cf. Acts 10, D&C 45:24-30). The gospel has been granted to them because of Israel's apostasy and Judah's intransigence. But, rather than redeem Israel, the majority of them have used it to promote themselves at Israel's expense. The Gentiles have grown arrogant in obtaining the gospel, so they think it is theirs by right and Israel is over and done. However, that is not the Lord's attitude. He remembers His covenant with Israel, and will redeem them as He promised He would, without or without the help of the Gentiles.

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