

Book of Mormon 37  
Whosoever Will Come Him Will I Receive  
(3 Nephi 8 -11)  
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(Here is inspirational background and physical evidences supporting the Book of Mormon)

I. Christ's appearance to the Nephites gives the clearest view of what it will be like when Christ returns to us.

A. The Nephites were fully warned that His Coming would be preceded by great destructions (1 Nephi 12:4-5; 19:10-12; Helaman 14:20-29).

B. We are warned **His Second Coming will come with similar but more intense and world-wide destructions** (D&C 29:14-21; 43:19-25; 88:87-91).

II. Because there had been general warnings for centuries, some watched for the signs, but others still rejected the possibility.

A. "And the [righteous] people **began to look with great earnestness for the sign** which had been given by Samuel the Lamanite... for the time that there should be darkness for the space of three days over the face of the land" (3 Ne. 8:3).

B. "And there began to be **great doubtings and disputations among the [unrighteous] people, notwithstanding so many signs had been given** (3 Ne. 8:4)

III. Note that as promised, the great destructions began suddenly, just as His Second Coming will come as a "thief in the night" (Matthew 24:42-51).

A. "And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, there arose a great storm, such an one as never had been known in all the land" (3 Ne. 8:5, 19).

IV. The destruction at that time came from earthquakes, tempests, whirlwinds, [i.e. tornadoes (v. 16)], and lightnings (3 Nephi 8:6-19)

A. **At His return, the destructions will include greater earthquakes and even volcanoes.**

1. "And the servants of God shall go forth, saying with a loud voice; Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come; ... [Call] upon the name of the Lord day and night, saying: O that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence.

2. And it shall be answered upon their heads; for the presence of the Lord shall be as the melting fire that burneth, and as the fire which causeth the waters to boil.... Yea, when thou comest down, and the **mountains flow down at thy presence...**" (D&C 133:41-44).

V. The Lord confirms it was **He who unleashed the destruction, but He does not rejoice in it!**

A. "Behold the great city of Zarahemla have I burned with fire, and the inhabitants thereof" (3 Nephi 9:3; See also verses 4-12).

B. The Lord sorrowfully explains why these terrible destructions were necessary.

1. Moronihah is covered with earth, that He might "hide their iniquities and their abominations from before my face, **that the blood of the prophets and the saints shall not come any more unto me against them**" (3 Nephi 9:5)

2. Jacobugath is burned because their wickedness was above the wickedness of the whole earth ... **they did destroy the peace of my people and the government of the land... [and] that the blood of the prophets and the saints should not come up unto me any more against them"** (3 Nephi 9:9).

3. Other cities are burned because of their "wickedness in **casting out the prophets, and stoning those whom I did send to declare unto them concerning their wickedness and their abominations"** (3 Nephi 9:10).

4. Fire destroys other cities because "**they did cast them [all the prophets and the righteous] out that there were none righteous among them"** (3 Nephi 9: 11).

5. Note that a common theme is that the people turned upon the prophets, even casting them out.

VI. After the destruction and three days of darkness, Christ appeared. **Many factors of that appearance will be similar at His return.**

A. "And it came to pass, as they understood [The Father's Voice] they cast their eyes up again towards heaven; and behold, they saw a Man descending out of heaven; and he was clothed in a white robe; and he came down and stood in the midst of them... "Behold, I am Jesus Christ whom the prophets testified shall come into the world. And behold, I am the light and the life of the world" (3 Nephi 11:8, 10-11).

B. At His Return: "then shall they look for me and, and behold, I will come; and they shall see me in the clouds of heaven, clothed with power and great glory; and with all the holy angels and **he that watches for me shall not be cut off"** (D&C 45:39-42). (Emphasis added).

VII. **Just as the destructions will be far greater at the Second Coming, so will the appearance of Jesus Christ be far more glorious, accompanied by all the Hosts of Heaven. The entire earth will know of His Coming.**

A. The light surrounding Christ was glorious and not just in contrast with the previous three days of total darkness.

1. When Arnold Freiberg was in his 90's, he decided he wanted to redo the initial painting he had made of Christ appearing to the Nephites. As he started to do so, many people were very worried. After all, prints had been made of this painting. Furthermore, he was in his 90's and his hands shook. But he persisted and what he redid (mostly) was **to make the light emanate from the Savior rather than coming down from Heaven. The work was retitled, "The Light of Christ."**

Elder Robert D. Hales, his neighbor, saw this painting. He asked Brother Freiberg, "You know?" Whereupon Freiberg replied firmly, "I know." That is, he bore testimony that the light emanated from Jesus Christ Himself, and not from other sources focusing on Christ.

B. At Christ's Return, His light will be so brilliant, it will seem like an eclipse of the sun, moon and stars.

1. "And so great shall be the glory of his presence that the sun shall hide his face in shame, and the moon shall withhold its light, and the stars shall be hurled from their places" (D& C 133: 49).

D. One way to understand this is to recognize that during every day **the stars still shine in our heavens, just as they do at night.** But we cannot see those stars due to the brilliance of the sun's light. **When Christ comes, His light will be so great, the light of the sun, moon and stars will seem as if they no longer exist, by comparison.**

E. It is important to know Christ's Light will not only be world-wide but penetrate into the deepest, darkest recesses.

VIII. The Nephites' perspective at Christ's Coming is the Church's perspective at His Return.

A. **Third Nephi gives the view most pertinent to those in Christ's Church today.**

1. We are more like the Nephites than any other people, having fully received Christ's gospel and covenants.

2. While there are today, as then, many great and wonderful members, as prophesied, all is not well in Zion. There are those who have fallen away, denying God and Christ and the latter-day prophets. We are often shocked to hear and see reports of those among us who have secretly abused children; persons who used church position to defraud others or took advantage of the innocent they were teaching; persons who have murdered; persons who assassinated character; persons who embezzled; persons who secretly purview pornography or engage in other sexual sins. It is unlikely all who have engaged in secret sins while professing righteousness are yet uncovered.

3. **Such persons will be in the gravest danger at Christ's return.** Christ's Light can penetrate deeper than any camouflage of any hidden sin. All things will be revealed.

4. Those who have hidden sins today may consider deeply the choices they are making.

IX. On the other hand Christ offers to gather all truly repentant into His loving arms, For He promises, and His promises do not fail, "Behold, mine arm of mercy is extended towards you, and whosoever will come, him will I receive; and blessed are those who come unto me" (3 Nephi 9:14).

A. Not only can the righteous rejoice with Christ, but can rejoice with all one's dearest family.

A. In contrast, the One whom some secretly serve will desert them, laughing and rejoicing that they are slain. "For the devil laugheth, and his angels rejoice, because of the slain of the fair sons and daughters of my people" (3 Nephi 9:2).

B. Rather than rejoicing with them, the **fallen must endure the weeping and wailing of their children**, just as those at Christ's first coming wept and wailed at the loss of those they loved.

C. Understanding these choices, it is not hard for anyone to know which fate they would really like to choose. **The challenge is to get Satan's hooks of temporary desire out of one's heart.**

X. While the wicked were destroyed, the more righteous received great words of comfort.

A. Some of the most heart rending words spoken by Jesus were those He spoke in Jerusalem just before His crucifixion. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, **how often would I have gathered my children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!** Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matthew 23:37-39).

B. Now we hear His beautiful words to **comfort those** in the Americas. For here at last were multitudes who did receive Him, who did choose **to be gathered under His wings!**

C. **What joy it must have brought the Savior to now have some who were responding to His call to Come unto Him.** And how much joy and comfort He must have felt knowing that He would yet visit others of His scattered people (3 Ne. 15:17). And other groups of His people would be gathered under His wings, and also partake of His great love.

D. The Book of Mormon truly is "A Book about God's Love," and here it is truly manifest.

XI. The multitudes praise Christ, and He responds.

A. The multitudes, after actually touching the wounded yet resurrected and glorified personage of Christ, unitedly shout "Hosanna, Blessed be the name of the most high God! And they did fall down at His feet and did worship Him" (3 Nephi 11:15-17). What a glorious scene. How much more glorious it will be at His return.

B. Nephi is asked to come forward and is given power to baptize His people.

1. I can't help but think what joy the people must have felt as they reentered the waters of baptism. Surely they had greater understanding now how this beautiful ordinance witnessed of Christ's death and resurrection, which was just now completed. I can't help but think how actually seeing Him in the Resurrection brought powerful new faith that through Him we can really die to our old selves and rise to become new ones, not only here in this life, but to new Eternal Natures.

C. **At His Return, how much greater will be the joy. For not only will we be personally renewed in many different ways, but we will see the Earth itself in the process of being renewed after its great Baptism by Fire and its most welcomed cleansing.**

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\* Note of interest: A collection of reports in *The Earthquake America Forgot*, portray terrible earthquakes in 1811-1812, emanating from the New Madrid Fault Line in Missouri. Earthquakes on that line have occurred during consistent periods, and **the regularity of their timing would have placed them as also occurring around the time of Jesus Christ.**

Furthermore: **The 1811/12 earthquakes produced the same phenomena as those reported in the Book of Mormon.** The major events were highly destructive with consistent quakings. Since most Moundbuilder sites were built next to bodies of water, they would easily have sunk into waters and been covered with waters, as cities did then. Since homes and synagogues were built of wood, they would easily have caught fire and burned from lightnings and upset hearthfires, as they did then. In the 1811/12 quakes, **geysers of sand erupted and covered cities with 15 to 20 feet of sand. That was similar to the fate of some cities in the Book of Mormon.** The 1811/12 earthquakes **produced days of darkness.** Darkness was so great they could not get light. One part of the book called "Earthquake Smog" gave eye-witness accounts of the darkness. One said, "My maw tried to light the lamps, but the darkness was so dense they didn't help at all." She also reported on "the awful darkness of the atmosphere." Another eyewitness, Godfrey LeSieur, recounted "a dense black cloud of vapor overshadowed the land."

A minister living near Cape Girardeau reported that within 3-4 days' time, "the sun, moon, and stars were concealed by a mist and fog which dropped like a heavy dew." (Compiled by Dr. David Stewart and Dr. Ray Knox from eyewitness accounts, newspaper articles, personal journals and correspondence, as well as on location research).

These reports verify that the **Book of Mormon recorded the same kinds of things that have actually occurred during the time of great earthquakes in America.**