

Book of Mormon 38  
Old Things Are Done Away and All Things Have Become New  
(3 Nephi 12-15)  
By Lenet Hadley Read

(Here is inspirational background and physical evidences supporting the Book of Mormon)

I. From beginning to end Jesus offered covenants to His people.

A. Thus He reminds the Nephites He had covenanted with Israel at Sinai. "I am he who gave the law, and I am he who covenanted with my people Israel" (3 Ne. 15:5).

B. He had also offered a new covenant at Galilee. His Sermon on the Mount there was the offering of a new, higher covenant with a new Israel.

C. **And now He offered this New, higher covenant to the Nephites. He gave to the Nephites the same higher law He had given those at Galilee** (3 Nephi 12:3 -14:27).

D. However, His covenant is recorded more correctly in the Book of Mormon. For example it is recorded He actually promised, "Blessed are the poor in spirit *who come unto me*, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (3 Ne. 12:3).

II. While simply called "the Beatitudes," His teachings were much more than that.

A. Because **they were covenants offered, they were given in terms of "If you will do this, you will receive this blessing."**

B. Note the examples: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost," etc.

C. After completing His sermon and giving the Nephites the parable of those who build their houses on rock by doing His word, the Savior summarized everything by offering the final part of His covenant: "therefore, whoso remembereth these sayings of mine and doeth them, him will I raise up at the last day" (3 Nephi 15:1). [Surely, being raised up is more than being resurrected, but being raised up to be with Him in His highest kingdom].

III. The New Setting for the Covenant was significant.\*

A. In previous dispensations, Jehovah offered His covenants on Mountains. As at Sinai so in Galilee, Jesus offered His new covenant on a Mount, because the Temple was in apostate hands.

B. Now He could offer His covenants at a holy Temple. "There were a great multitude gathered together ... round about the temple which was in the land Bountiful" (3 Nephi 11:1). The people had instinctively gathered to the temple.

1. When there is no temple, the Lord uses a sacred, isolated place such as a mountain. But when a temple is built, it is the site of covenant making. This interrelation is shown in that temples are called "The Mountain of the Lord's House."

2. Just as the Nephites, at His coming, would we not instinctively go to one of His temples or great meeting places at His return?

3. We are blessed in these Latter-days to have many temples in which to make our most sacred covenants.

IV. Jesus makes absolutely clear **He is replacing the Old Covenant with a new one: "Old things are done away, and all things have become new"** (3 Nephi 12:46).

A. The Law which Jehovah had made at Sinai was a Law of carnal commandments, of sacrifice of blood and beasts.

B. Now those old offerings were replaced with newer and higher requirements.

C. Most importantly, the old law of blood sacrifice was replaced with the need for a far greater sacrifice --- of our own broken heart and our own contrite spirit (3 Nephi 12:19).

D. While the ancient carnal laws were done away, His spiritual laws remained, such as the Ten Commandments. But **these too were infused with a new level or higher form of law.**

1. "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time... that thou shalt not kill ... But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of his judgment" (3 Nephi 12:21).

2. "Behold, it is written by them of old time, that thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you that whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already in his heart" (3 Nephi 15:27-28).

E. Thus the whole Law and Covenant were given new, more sacred underpinnings.

1. Some critics of the Book of Mormon have said that the Book of Mormon just copies the Bible. But would not Jesus Christ have given the same precious teachings and made the same precious covenants with all of His people, in every land! These things prove its truthfulness.

V. When examined as a whole, Christ's sermon was meant to show His people how they could be as they were meant to be --- a Light to the world.

A. **Christ had become a light to the world in the way he endured the things which He suffered --- in particular by taking upon Himself the sins of others.**

B. In fact, the Menorah placed before the veil of the temple had always witnessed of Him as the Light which leads back to the presence of God.

C. Even some Jews recognized that the Menorah, whose gold and oil were to be "beaten for the light," was a witness of someone who would suffer so greatly he would glow with light. That personage was Jesus the Christ.

D. **Now, the Savior teaches that by passing through trials and overcoming them for the sake of the Father, we too could glow with light as He had --- bringing many to God as He had done.**

1. Note the preponderance of passages which show how overcoming trials, injustices, etc., will lead to becoming Perfect (12:48), thus creating within oneself the "Light" which will eventually radiate to all others.

a. Blessed are the poor "in spirit" who come unto me 12:3.

b. Blessed are those that mourn 12:4.

c. Blessed are the meek 12:5.

d. Blessed are the merciful 12:7.

e. Blessed are the peacemakers 12:9.

f. Blessed are they who are persecuted for my name's sake 12:10.

g. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake 12:11.

h. Be reconciled with your brother if he has something against you 12:24.

i. Agree with thine adversary quickly 12:25.

j. Better to take up your cross [than sin] 12:27-30.

k. Whosoever shall smite thee on the cheek, turn to him the other 12:39.

l. Whosoever will take away thy coat, give him thy cloak also 12:40.

m. Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain 12:42.

n. Love your enemies; bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you 12:44.

o. If you keep my word, ye shall be built upon my rock, and in spite of all storms, you shall endure 14:24-27.

E. Jesus explains what then will be the result. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you to be the light of this people. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Behold, do men light a candle and put it under a bushel? Nay, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light to all that are in the house: Therefore let your light shine before this people, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in Heaven" (3 Nephi 12:14-16).

VI. It may be puzzling that Jesus seems to give two contradictory teachings. One is to let one's light shine before men rather than hiding it under a bushel. And yet he also specifically teaches that we should do many of our most sacred things in secret. These include:

A. Do thy alms in secret 12:1-4.

B. Pray in secret 13:5-15.

C. Fast in secret 13:16-17.

D. When we look at the whole of these teachings, we see that even those good things which we do in secret, the Lord will eventually reveal. "and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly" (3 Ne. 13:4, 6). So in the long run, we will be honored not only for doing the works of righteousness, but also for doing them quietly, not ostentatiously, having done them not to glorify ourselves, but to glorify our Father who is in Heaven.

Thus the light we emit will be an even greater light.

VII. In living this way we are following Christ, who tells that not only is He the Great Light of the world, but how His light reaches its peak.

A. "I am the light and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning" (3 Nephi 11:11).

B. The fact is, most of the miracles the Savior did as well as His true identity He tried to keep secret --- until the very end. And certainly most did not comprehend His greatest miracle --- the work of His atoning sacrifice, until after it was accomplished.

C. In the End, He was glorified all the more because He had done all things to glorify His Father, not Himself.

D. Similarly, as we keep these very challenging covenants which the Lord offers, we radiate a greater light --- the same kind of light which Jesus Christ radiated.

E. When my brother, Darrell Hadley returned from a three year mission to Japan in the 1950's he shared his feelings at seeing the country of his birth after so long an absence.

1. As his huge passenger ship neared the United States, he was out on the bow looking for the first sight of land. Even with the excitement of returning home, missionary work still affected his thoughts. "I was to be rewarded by the sight of the Golden Gate Bridge spanning the mouth of the harbor. Thoughts of how wonderful America was pumped through my mind. Here is where my family was, the friends I had left..., and the spring from which the waters of salvation poured out to all the nations of the world. I stood in awe of this heaven blessed land."

The United States of America for centuries has truly been a light to the world. It has positively influenced the world in setting standards of freedom. But even more so, Christ's true gospel light, spread from its shores by dedicated missionaries, continues to bless the lives of millions throughout the world.

However, as the United States has begun to export continually its most unseemly forms of wickedness, its light is tarnished. This makes it even more necessary for all the faithful members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, wherever we live, to continue to radiate our light throughout the world. **We are the world's last great hope until the Return of Jesus the Christ.**

\* Those interested in Book of Mormon geography may find the following of interest.

I. Do we know the place of the temple at Bountiful where these sacred events occurred?

A. No, we do not. While many artists have placed the setting for Christ's return at a great stone temple like those in Mesoamerica, which are indeed quite picturesque, the truth is that such structures were not built until long after the time of Christ.

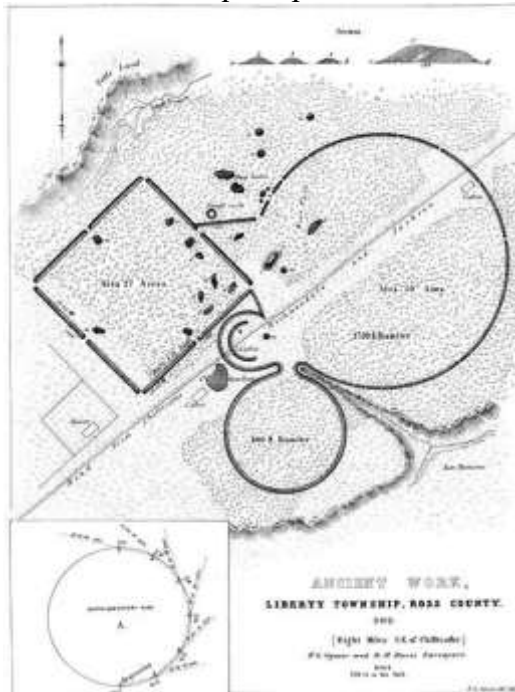
B. But the Nephites were a temple building people. And for those who would place the Nephites in North America, since that is where the Hill Cumorah is, there are amazing structures which were left by the Moundbuilders, which suggest in every way that they were temples. Many of them are in southern Ohio.

C. Many of them were painstakingly and carefully constructed of earth and wood, as most Book of Mormon construction is described.

D. **Interestingly, their patterns of construction are consistent with patterns we see even in our temples today --- particularly the patterns of squares and connecting circles. Circles are a symbol of eternity. Squares are seen as representing earth (i.e., the four corners of earth). When squares are connected to circles or circles are inside squares, they are understood to signify "where heaven meets earth." This sums up not just the symbolism but the very purpose of a Temple. Importantly, the *circles* used in the Moundbuilder sites have no other exits or entrances, except that which comes from its connecting square [or octagon].**

E. Amazingly, there are five sites in southern Ohio, all set at the same distance from each other, all of which were made into circle and square patterns. All the circles and squares have

exactly the same dimensions.



F. But there is one more dominating site. It is called the Great Octagon. It is north of these five sites. And it still exists today because its high earthen walls were fortunately preserved, and it is surrounded today by parts of a golf course.

1. This site as a whole is quite complex, but the main portions are a very large octagon connected to a large circle.

2. The pattern of an octagon is also used in our temples. **Its eight-sides denote the number eight, which early Christians understood as representative of the Abrahamic covenant.**

a. When I visited the Great Octagon, I saw that each entrance into it had a small barrier, which blocked temporary admittance and the view. In my mind it reminded me exactly of a temple recommend desk. People who entered were screened before being admitted and until admitted could not see inside.

3. **The Great Octagon is so large Stonehenge would fit into a small part of it.**

4. While no one knows for certain, many believe the Great Octagon would be a perfect setting for the Temple Bountiful. Today, it is only a shadow of itself. But one can recognize that at one time, in its glory, it had great significance to a worshipful people.

a. The Square and Octagon pattern in the Great Octagon and the five other square and circle patterned sites south of it, Seip Works, Ohio; North Fork Ohio; Ancient Works, Liberty Township, Ohio; Dunlap Works, Ohio can all be seen online on various websites. Look for them by those names.