

Book of Mormon 42
This Is My Gospel
3 Nephi 27-30; 4th Nephi
By Lenet Hadley Read

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

I. Jesus tells His disciples that His Church must bear His name and be based upon His Gospel.

A. He first answered their question of what to name His Church: "Have ye not read the scriptures which say **ye must take upon you the name of Christ**, which is my name? For by this name shall ye be called at the last day.... therefore ye shall call the church in my name; and ye shall call upon the Father in my name that he will bless the church for my sake" (3 Ne. 1:5, 7)

B. So **Jesus connects the name of His Church to the covenanting of its individual members to take upon themselves His name. For He interjected that "Whoso taketh upon him my name, and endureth to the end, the same shall be saved at the last day"** (3 Ne. 1:6).

C. Thus we first covenant to take upon ourselves the name of Christ when we are baptized and confirmed members of His Church.

D. We further witness our willingness to take upon ourselves His name during the sacrament.

II. There are several spiritual significances to these processes.

A. As a bride takes upon herself the name of the bridegroom, **so the Savior asks us, as His covenanted people and thus like a bride --- to take upon ourselves His name.** We are expected to follow this up by becoming faithful, fruitful members of His Church.

B. As children bear the name of their Father, **so we as His children bear the name of Christ,** our Father, for **He has spiritually begotten us through His atonement, death and resurrection.** We are expected to follow this up by becoming faithful, fruitful members of His Church.

C. As His disciples, we take upon ourselves His name when we willingly follow in His footsteps, bearing what He bore. Thus we become faithful, fruitful members of His Church.

III. As His name is so important, there are things we should know about Jesus' name:

A. Jesus' Hebrew name was Joshua ben Joseph. (Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua; "ben" means "of the House of;" Jesus' mortal surname would have been "Joseph").

B. Jesus' mortal surname is not insignificant. Dr. Hugh Nibley has pointed out that the name "Joseph" actually means "suffering servant" (*Since Cumorah*, p. 233-34). Aren't we who covenant to take upon ourselves the name of Christ committing ourselves to bear His surname as well --- a name which in its very nature means "suffering servant?" That means we are willing to suffer all things for the sake and name of Jesus the Christ. This is one of the reasons it was very significant that the prophet Joseph Smith was given the name of Joseph, just as the last son of Lehi, Joseph, who was "born in the wilderness of my affliction" received that name. And from the scriptures we learn that these persons receiving the name of Joseph had a connection to Joseph who was sold into Egypt, whose life was also as a "suffering servant." (As is explained and detailed in 2 Nephi Ch. 3)

C. Through our own spiritual sight, hopefully, we see how the life of Joseph of Egypt was a similitude of Jesus the Christ. **Thus all of these people who are called Joseph are types of Jesus the Christ and it is significant that they bore the name of Joseph.**

D. Furthermore, all us who are of Ephraim and Manasseh **really are "of the House of Joseph"** and therefore legitimately take upon ourselves that name.

IV. A song which expresses the wonder, beauty and even longing to take upon oneself the name of Jesus Christ is "I Am Called by thy Name" composed by Crawford Gates. The text is taken from Jeremiah 15:16. The lyrics are very simple but as set to Gates' music are very beautiful.

A. "Thy words were found and I did eat them.

And thy word was unto me The joy and rejoicing of my heart.

For I am called by thy Name, I am called by thy name, For I am called by thy name, I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts." (Repeat all)

B. In this song, the words "I am called by thy name" are repeated many times. The many repetitions, however, permit the expression of very deep feeling that comes with such marvelous knowledge. **To be called by the name of The Lord God of Hosts is an awesome thing.** It is even more awesome to be called by the name of that Lord God of Hosts who lowered Himself to become our dear atoning Savior. That brings not only awe but great depths of tenderness and gratitude. The repetition of the theme allows all expression of emotion that can come in realizing the enormous blessing to be called by the name of one so Holy and yet so merciful.

1. The hymn is sung by the Tabernacle Choir on their CD "Consider the Lilies." It is also shared on YouTube on a video entitled, "I Am Called by Thy Name."

C. Jesus completed His teachings about **the importance of bearing his name by also teaching that all things which are done in His Church must be done in His name** (3 Ne. 7).

D. This demonstrates that the name, Jesus the Christ, is very powerful.

V. Jesus explained His Church must be based upon His Gospel and summarizes what that Gospel is: "That I came into the world to do the will of my father, because my Father sent me."

A. He then reminds them of His work of salvation: His crucifixion and resurrection will lift those who repent and are baptized and endure to the end back to the Father (3 Nephi 1:14-17).

B. "And my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross; and **after that I had been lifted upon the cross, that I might draw all men unto me**, that as I have been lifted up by men even so should men be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil --- And for this cause have **I been lifted up; therefore according to the power of the Father I will draw all men unto me**, that they may be judged according to their works" (3 Ne. 1:27:14-15).

C. Thus we know that His Church must be fully based upon Jesus Christ and His works.

VI. When Jesus has walked among believing men who know His great condescension; they also realize that He alone should be exalted. Seeing His great example, they lose all instincts of selfishness, and truly regard each other with greater love. They **grow in that love to such a degree that they are willing to have all things in common.**

A. This was so both among the Christians in the Old World and those in the New World.

B. It is also likely it was **because the people were of one heart and one mind that so many great miracles were able to be accomplished among them during this time.**

VII. Jesus' great generosity caused Him to let His disciples, at the end of their lives, to be blessed "according to their heart's desires" (See 3 Ne. 28:1-10). **Three of them desired to not die then, but to continue to bring many souls to Him.**

A. There are many false stories about the appearance of the Three Nephites. However, **here is one which is most likely true.** And it is also very significant, because it comes from the kind of source which it should have come from --- from descendants of Lehi's people. Further, it teaches truth which would not have been otherwise known by the one who experienced the contact.

This account is highly abbreviated from one published in full in "The Code of Handsome Lake, the Seneca Prophet," published by the Educational Department of the State of New York.

B. In the early 1800's, Handsome Lake, a once great leader among the Senecas, was aging and in despair. He saw that his people, once proud, were now at their lowest level: betrayed and pushed onto a reservation, crushed, and taken to drink in despondency. He repented of his own sins, and prayed he might be given strength to lead them back to be a strong people again. It did not happen. So he prayed he might die.

One day, his wife who was working in the back, heard him cry out, "Nio" (So be it). She then found him lying prostrate at the entrance to their dwelling. He seemed dead. She got help to move him to a bed, and called his half-brothers. They prepared for a funeral.

However, both brothers noticed warm spots in his body. They decided to delay the funeral until the middle of the next day.

Just before that time, he awoke and sat up. He told them "Never have I seen such wondrous visions --- **Three shining messengers dressed in sparkling white,** and a fourth I could not see, delivered to me a mission that I must perform for the benefit of our people." (Emphasis added)

He then told them he had been taken by these three "whom I saw standing in clear swept space" on a journey into the heavens. While there they showed him two great roads: "This narrow road leads to the pleasant lands of the Creator, and the wide and rough road leads to the great lodge of the punisher." He is taken to see the outcome of following each of the roads.

The messengers gave him a set of rules to teach his people so that they would become pleasing again to the creator. They said, "...the favor of the Creator is not for you alone, and He is ready to help all mankind who will repent and do His will. **We, the servants of Him who created us, have been employed to come to you to reveal His will, and you must carry it to your people.**" They stressed the abandonment of strong drink and gave him a set of teachings which fit the teachings of the Savior. (Emphasis added. From *This Land: Willard's Cumorah Land*. Research of Willard Bean), Ancient American Archeology, publisher, 2012, pp. 114-117).

VIII. There was a Time of Great Peace separating two times of Great War (4th Nephi).

A. Physical evidence supports the time of great peace between two times of war.

1. The archaeological record in North America verifies there was a time of great peace during the same timelines set by the Book of Mormon. One of the **greatest times of war was the century just before Christ** as shown by fortifications in the upper Midwest.

C. Then archaeologists have noted **a great time of peace** which began at a time parallel to Christ's age and lasted a few hundred years. Archaeologists find a lack of wounds, usually found from fighting, in the burials of the time **between early A.D. and about 400 A.D.** (George R. Milner, *The Moundbuilders: Ancient Peoples of Eastern North America*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2004, pp. 9, 85).

D. **The numerous fortifications and the signs of a "war of extermination" around Cumorah were noted by many, including prominent people like the Governor of New York,** who reported

them to the New York Historical Society in 1808. (*This Land: Willard's Cumorah Land*, pp. 149-178).