

Book of Mormon 45
Never Has Man Believed in Me as Thou Hast
Ether 1-6
By Lenet Hadley Read

(Here is inspirational background as well as evidences supporting the Book of Mormon)

I. The brother of Jared was told, "Never has man believed in me as thou hast."

A. Thus he was blessed to see Jesus the Christ.

B. Joseph Smith was later similarly blessed, and a result was that through the Book of Mormon he came to know of the Jaredites --- that there had actually been more than one ancient civilization upon the American continents. (Some settlers realized there had been one).

C. The Golden Plates revealed to Joseph that the Jaredites lived upon this land shortly after the tower of Babel, 2200 to 2000 B.C.

1. Archaeologists now agree there was a civilization at the time of the Jaredites. In North America scholars have given them the name "Adena," after property where remains were found.

D. Joseph learned **there were four civilizations** including Lehi's people beginning at 600 B.C.

1. Archaeologists now agree that there was a separate, later civilization dated to the same time as Lehi. In North America, they are given the name the "Hopewell," because evidences of their existence were first discovered upon land of a man named Hopewell.

2. A third civilization, the Mulekites, lived upon this land, arriving in a different area but dated from approximately the same time as Lehi. **The Book of Mormon gives internal evidence: after their merger, names suddenly appear whose roots come from Mulek, such as Amulek, Amaleki; Amalekites; Amalickiah; and Amalickiahites (See Book of Mormon Index, p. 9-10).**

F. In fact George Reynolds of the Seventies and Janne Sjordahl gave strong evidence the name "America" is the accepted form of an old Indian name Amerique. And that the name signifies "The Land of the King of Jehovah." (Book of Mormon Study Guide. Part 1, p. 152).

G. **Joseph also revealed the first of all civilizations here were the people of Adam, down to the time of Noah and the flood.** Evidences of that existence have also been discovered by archaeologists, though that evidence is misunderstood.

II. The Book of Mormon says the Jaredites were of a large and mighty physical build.

A. They were described as "large and mighty men" (Ether 1:34; 15:26).

B. Articles through the ages in U.S. newspapers have **featured finds of skeletons over seven (7) feet and even ten (10) feet tall. Skulls have been found which can fit over the head of a modern man. Pictures still exist of these skeletons and skulls.** Some newspapers referred to them as "Giants." Evidences come from North and South America. (See Wayne May, ed., "Searching for the Jaredites on the Promise Land," *Ancient American*, LDS Special Edition V., pp 9-15.)

C. The Book of Mormon **revealed there were elephants**, useful to man (Ether 9:19).

1. An **earthwork in Ohio is shaped in the form of an elephant.** Archaeologists date it to the Jaredite timeline. (Wayne N. May and Vicki Bean Topliff, *This Land: Willard's Cumorah Land*, p. 183. Also, ancient elephant bones have been discovered in many different places).

III. Joseph Smith knew through The Book of Mormon that the United States would be choice above all the lands of the earth (Ether 1:42) This promise was meant for all time. It would be true for the Jaredites, for the Nephites, and for us in the Latter-days. This nation would be blessed because **"the Lord God had preserved [it] for a righteous people"** (Ether 2:7).

A. As we read this today, this does not seem like a remarkable prophecy. **However, at the time the Book of Mormon came forth, it was.** When the Book of Mormon came out, the United States consisted of far less than half of its total geographical mass of today. Most of the country lay undeveloped agriculturally as well as commercially, **and was mostly possessed or co- possessed by other nations.** While some colonists had hopes for its future, there were no guarantees, and certainly no idea at that time that its greatness as a world power would exceed England, France.

It was not until after the Second World War that the United States actually became a greater power than all other nations of the earth.

B. This promise was also made to the Jaredites, that their civilization would become a great nation and "there shall be none greater than the nation which I will raise up unto me of thy seed" the Lord promised the Brother of Jared (Ether 1:43).

C. There are now evidences the Jaredite civilization was far greater than generally recognized. They grew especially rich due to mining of copper and other ore producing. And they became a great trading civilization, as told in the Book of Mormon (Ether 10:23).

IV. The Jaredites added their message to the Nephites in warning our Latter-day generation.

A. "And this cometh unto you, O ye Gentiles, that ye may know the decrees of God --- that ye may repent, and not continue in your iniquities until the fullness come, that ye may not bring down the fullness of the wrath of God upon you as the inhabitants of the land have hitherto done. Behold this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ " (Ether 2:11-12).

B. It is also made clear to the Gentiles as to past civilizations, when "ye are fully ripe [in iniquity] ye shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord" (Ether 2:15).

V. The **Jaredites journey witnessed of Eternal Life, and that Jesus Christ is the way to it.**

A. Lehi's journey to the Promised Land was also a pattern or similitude of this truth.

1. After teaching Helaman of the significance of the Liahona, Alma says, "And now I say, is there not a type [teaching pattern] in this thing?"

For just as surely as this director did bring our fathers, by following its course, to the promised land, shall the words of Christ, if we follow their course, carry us beyond this vale of sorrow into a far better land of promise" [Heaven] (Alma 37:45).

B. The journey of the Jaredites taught this same truth, utilizing different teaching tools.

1. Like Lehi, the Jaredites were also chosen, called out, from a people who had just experienced God's wrath. **They too were promised a choice land, were led through a wilderness, and were brought to the obstacle of a "great deep." They found that only through help from God could they cross such a body of great waters.** The central role of Christ as Savior is portrayed in this event, if we are willing to see it with our spiritual eyes.

For the Savior says, "behold, ye shall be as a whale in the midst of the sea; for the mountain waves shall dash upon you. Nevertheless, **I will bring you up again out of the depths of the sea...** And behold, I prepare you against these things [the destroying winds and watery depths]. For ye cannot cross this great deep save I prepare you against the waves of the sea, and the winds which have gone forth, and the floods which shall come" (Ether 2:25).

C. We should understand that **the great depths of the sea represented death and hell --- those great barriers which keep us from Eternal Life. And only through Jesus Christ, who will lift up the believing, can we hope to inherit Eternal Life.**

Noah's Ark, the Ark of the Covenant, Moses' ark, Nephi's ships, the Jaredite barges, **all taught of Christ, for they were made after the pattern of His work of salvation** (See "The Ark of the Covenant," June 1980 *Ensign*, pp. 20-24). Each "ark" worked in unison with other instruments which also typified Christ and revealed other aspects of His atonement and resurrection.

Through the process of "lifting up," each bore the chosen, the believing, out of and over waters signifying death, to a land covenanted to the faithful by God, a land symbolizing Eternal Life. Thus they all taught of the atonement, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

1. While the Lord taught these things through similitudes, He also taught them in the Book of Mormon in clarity. Moroni wrote the lessons learned from the Jaredites, and sealed them up for a witness to the Latter-days: In Ether 4:13-14 he said "rend the veil of unbelief." He promised we too will be able to "see" as the prophets have done. And He says, "Repent all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me, ... for he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; ... And blessed is he that is found faithful unto my name at the last day, for he **shall be lifted up to dwell in the kingdom prepared for him from the foundation of the world**" (Ether 4:18-19). [Emphasis added].

VII. The Lord revealed to the Jaredites **our ultimate goal is to "return into God's Presence."**

A. The faith of the brother of Jared brought him into the presence of the Lord. "Because thou knowest these things, ye are redeemed from the fall; therefore ye are brought back into my presence; therefore I show myself unto you" (Ether 3:13).

B. We find other witnesses of what we must do to eventually re-enter God's presence.

1. We must earnestly seek God through prayer. "And it came to pass at the end of four years that the Lord came again unto the brother of Jared, and stood in a cloud and talked with him. And for the space of three hours did the Lord talk with the brother of Jared and chastened him because he remembered not to call upon the name of the Lord" (Ether 2:14).

C. **We need to seek the guidance of Christ's light.**

1. Like the others also chosen and led, the Jaredites needed special instruments of guidance in addition to their arks. The brother of Jared first exercised his faith through his labors, preparing stones, and then he offered, again in faith, an earnest prayer: "Touch these stones, O Lord, with thy finger, and prepare them that they may shine forth in darkness... that we may have light while we shall cross the sea" (Ether 3:24).

2. Jehovah caused the stones to radiate light and then taught: **"I am Jesus Christ... In me shall all mankind have light, and that eternally, even they who shall believe on my name"** (Ether 3:14).

Even more, He bestowed "two stones," saying "ye shall seal them up" and "I will cause these stones shall magnify to the eyes of men these things which ye shall write" (Ether 3:23-25). **So the Lord provided light that we might understand all of these things in the Latter-days.**

These two events witness that we too must seek Christ's light, and then we must do all we can to obtain it. If we are earnest and persistent, it will come --- from Him. And His light will work with His ministry of salvation to bring us back into His presence.

D. Death is indeed one of the most sobering elements of life. Yet, for those who will prayerfully search, the Lord has provided many witnesses, including that of the Jaredites.

He offers a covenant to mankind and fulfilled the reality of its hope --- out of unfathomable love there will be an ark, waiting at that barrier of death, which will gently bear us over cold and empty darkness and out of the grasps of Hell, and bring us to inheritance of New Life.

For those who develop the faith of Mahonri and Joseph, their inheritance will be a life of love within God's very Presence.